

University of Bath



**PHD**

## **Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the People's Republic of China**

Li, Neville

*Award date:*  
2017

*Awarding institution:*  
University of Bath

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# **Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the People's Republic of China**

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A thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies

October 2017

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## **Acknowledgements**

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First and foremost, I would like to thank Prof David Galbreath, my lead supervisor, for his support and supervision. I am most grateful that he is always there to provide academic guidelines and reassurance when I am in need. I would also like to express my gratitude to my second supervisor, Dr Scott Thomas, for his valuable comments on the positioning for my career path. It has been an honour and a privilege working with them.

My sincere gratitude also goes to the rest of my dissertation committee: Prof Timo Kivimaki and Prof Claudia Aradau, for their precious time to review my dissertation during the summer time and their valuable comments and publication advices.

My PhD studies at the University of Bath were made possible by the Graduate School Scholarship (Overseas) offered by the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences. Special thanks also go to my postgraduate community, especially Dr Ben Bowman, Luke Cahill, Dr Mattia Cacciatori, Andrea Delgado, Dr Brett Edwards, Tomos Evans, Sung Won Lee, Zainab Mai-Bornu, Dr Goker Onen, Dr Arash Pashakhanlou, Galadriel Ravelli, Milena Romano and Dr Yu-Han Teng. I am sure I will miss our days in the office.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for their unconditional support throughout such a long journey of my PhD studies. I am indebted to all my family and friends and I could not have done it without their kind support.

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30<sup>th</sup> June 2017

## Abstract

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As Kingsley Davis stated, ‘the study of population offers one of the unique and indispensable approaches to an understanding of world affairs’ (Davis 1954, p.vii). In the discipline of International Relations, valuable security and political implications have been yielded by examining how population growth constitutes violent conflicts in traditional security studies (e.g. Choucri 1974; North and Choucri 1971). Non-traditional security (NTS) also develops its own problem-solving approach, e.g. human security, to solve demographic-related issues encountered by humankind such as famine and unemployment (UNDP 1994).

Despite both traditional and NTS studies having established their material approaches, the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics has yet to be studied in detail. Specifically, this dissertation examines how ideational relationship is/can be established by ‘securitising’ population dynamics, i.e. how to rhetorically make population dynamics a security threat.

The thesis adopted a combined analytical framework of the Copenhagen School and the Paris School in the case of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to identify how the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics was established. It first adopts the securitisation framework to examine how the PRC rhetorically constructed population growth as a security threat and introduced its emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy. The dissertation then reveals the politics of the prolonged securitisation by evaluating the one-child policy as a technique for governmentality of unease and demonstrates how this constitutes the shift from securitising population growth to population decline.

This dissertation argues that population dynamics can be constructed as (the cause of) numerous security threats through a successful securitisation. With the case of the PRC, the thesis demonstrates the *de facto* politicisation of population growth before the late 70s, and how the *de jure* securitisation was adopted in a Communist manner to legitimise the

world's strictest population policy, i.e. the one-child policy, as its emergency measure to solve various existential threats posed by population dynamics. In addition, the study of politics of securitisation in the case of the PRC further unfolds the struggles of priorities among different actors, which brings us political, practical and relational implications about this governmentality of unease that lasted for almost 4 decades.

A deeper understanding of how our ideas of demography shape what we call 'security threats' sheds lights on how states formulate comprehensive security agendas by taking population dynamics into account due to its immense importance to threat construction. Other security actors such as international organisations, private sectors, and even individuals can more easily convince relevant audiences to legitimise the securitisation of the specific demographic-related threats they are facing. As Sciubba put it, 'population dynamics could be a challenge or an opportunity' (Sciubba 2011, p.3). Accumulating knowledge of the ideational connections between security and population dynamics increases the ability of various security actors to confront these challenges through a successful securitisation, which contribute to preventing numerous demographic-related threats from happening or at least easing these pains of humankind.

## Contents

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<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	ii
<b>Abstract</b> .....	iii
<b>Contents</b> .....	v
<b>List of figures</b> .....	viii
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	ix
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction</b> .....	1
1.1 The Twin Issues of Security and Population Dynamics.....	3
1.2 A combined framework for analysis.....	4
1.3 Research Questions and Objectives.....	7
1.4 Rationale and Dissertation Structure.....	7
<b>Chapter 2 – The Evolution of Security Theories</b> .....	9
2.1 The Founding of Security Studies.....	11
• 2.1.1 Traditional Security and Population Dynamics.....	13
2.2 Broadening Traditional Security in the changing world order.....	15
2.3 The Fading Away of Realism and the New War thesis.....	18
2.4 The Rise of Critical Approaches to Security.....	21
2.5 Critical Theory and the Welsh School.....	24
2.6 Human Security and the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) .....	27
2.7 Constructivism.....	31
2.8 The Copenhagen School and the Securitisation framework.....	33
• 2.8.1 Differences between the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School.....	37
• 2.8.2 Criticisms of Securitisation.....	39
○ 2.8.2.1 Criticisms of Euro-American presumptions.....	39
○ 2.8.2.2 Criticisms of Speech Act.....	42
○ 2.8.2.3 Other Criticisms of Securitisation.....	44
2.9 Post-structuralism and the Paris School.....	44
2.10 A Combined Framework for Analysis.....	48

<b>Chapter 3 - Security and Population: Towards a new framework of Population-Security nexus.....</b>	<b>53</b>
3.1 Population Dynamics and National Security.....	57
• 3.1.1 Demography, Technology, Resources and Violent Conflicts.....	58
• 3.1.2 Capitalism, Marxism, Environment and Population Dynamics.....	62
3.2 Population Dynamics and Non-Traditional Security.....	65
3.3 From Securitising Migration to Population Dynamics.....	71
3.4 Towards a new framework of Population-Security nexus.....	73
• 3.4.1 Why study the PRC on Securitisation of Population Dynamics?.....	75
<b>Chapter 4 – Politicisation of Population Growth in the PRC: Ideological and Ideational transformations.....</b>	<b>81</b>
4.1. An Overview of Birth Control Propaganda in the PRC.....	83
• 4.1.1 Stage 1 Overview: Ideological and Cultural Incompetence.....	87
• 4.1.2 Stage 2 Overview: From Marxism to Maoism - Ideological Transformation among top CCP officials.....	88
• 4.1.3 Chinese Politics and the manipulation of demographic data.....	90
• 4.1.4 Stage 3 Overview: Ideational Transformation in Chinese society.....	91
• 4.1.5 Socialist Approach to Politicisation/Securitisation.....	92
4.2 Stage 1: Ideological Contradictions on Population Control.....	97
• 4.2.1 Cultural and Historical Resistance to the idea of Family Limitation.....	101
○ 4.2.1.1 First Turning Point in Stage 1 Politicisation.....	104
4.3 Stage 2: Disruptions of Propaganda and Ideological Transformation.....	112
• 4.3.1 Changing Propaganda tactics after the Great Chinese Famine.....	117
• 4.3.2 The Cultural Revolution and the Disruption of Birth Control Propaganda.....	120
4.4 Stage 3: The Significant Influence of Mao on promoting Birth Planning.....	122
4.5 The Political Communication on Politicisation/Securitisation in the PRC.....	126
4.6 The Stepping Up of Population Control: Introduction of the One-child policy.....	130
<b>Chapter 5 – From <i>de facto</i> Politicisation to <i>de jure</i> Securitisation: Securitising Population Dynamics and its politics in the PRC.....</b>	<b>135</b>
5.1 Issue area and Sectors .....	138

5.2 Deng and the CCP top officials as the Security Rhetoric Initiators.....	141
5.3 The Securitisation of Population Growth and the PRC as a Securitising Organism.....	144
5.4 The Process of Securitisation: The Speeches, Coercion, and Self-Reinforcing Actors.....	154
5.5 The Politics of Securitisation: The Governmentality of Unease and the Obeisance of Relevant Audiences.....	163

**Chapter 6 – Struggles of Priority in Security Practices and the Shift to securitisation of Population Decline in the PRC.....172**

6.1 The Paris School of Security Studies and its application to the case of the PRC.....	173
6.2 The Chinese Attempt to Adopt a Relational Approach.....	177
6.3 Actors in the Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the PRC.....	179
• 6.3.1 The role of CCP Top Officials as Security Rhetoric Initiators .....	179
• 6.3.2 The role of Regional and Local Officials as Reinforcing Security Practitioners.....	182
• 6.3.3 The role of Discontented Relevant Audiences.....	186
6.4 Explaining the one-child policy cycle using the Paris School approach.....	189
6.5 Evaluating the one-child policy as a technique of Governmentality of Unease.....	200
6.6 From Securitisation of Population Growth to Population Decline.....	207

**Chapter 7 – Conclusion.....215**

7.1 Ideational relationship established through Politicisation and Securitisation.....	216
7.2 The Everyday Practices and the Struggles of Priorities.....	219
7.3 Governmentality of Unease: The Shift from Securitising Population Growth to Population Decline .....	221
7.4 Future Research and Contribution to Policy Makers and Academics.....	222

**Bibliography.....225**



## **List of table and figures**

---

Table 1. The Copenhagen School and the Paris School.....	49
Figure 1. Choucri's research on Population Dynamics and National Security.....	61
Figure 2. Population and NTSs.....	68
Figure 3. Possible ideational connections between Security and Population Dynamics...	74
Figure 4. Politicisation of Population Growth in the early PRC: Ideational Connections drawn by Birth Planning Propaganda.....	118
Figure 5: Posters of Family Planning in the PRC.....	127
Figure 6. The Communist Organic System for politicisation and securitisation.....	128
Figure 7. The target of the one-child policy.....	147
Figure 8. Securitisation of Population Growth in the PRC.....	150
Figure 9. Population Projection of the PRC.....	168
Figure 10. Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the PRC.....	212

## **List of abbreviations**

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ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CCCCPC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CPIC	China Population Information Centre
DRA	Discontented Relevant Audience
EIDs	Emerging Infectious Diseases
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IFDA	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JEC	Joint Economic Committee of the United States of America
KMT	Kuomintang (Nationalist Party of China)
LDCs	Less Developed Countries
MDCs	More Developed Countries
NMR	Net Migration Rate
NPFPC	National Population and Family Planning Commission
NTS	Non-Traditional Security
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
RSP	Reinforcing Security Practitioner
SCIO	State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
SFPC	State Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China
SRI	Security Rhetoric Initiator
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

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7 billion.

The world population reached 7 billion in October 2011 (UN 2011). This was the same year the idea occurred to me to do a PhD on the topic of population and security - after realising that our population is historically huge. In fact, for someone who lives in Hong Kong, it is unsettling to imagine that the world is getting more densely populated, as the city-state has one of the world highest population densities, i.e. 6958 people per km<sup>2</sup> - that is the equivalent of almost 700 people living in one football field (World Bank 2017). However, my homeland also suffers from a shrinking working population, and the situation is dire when this combines with an ageing population. It seems that whether a population grows too large or too small, it sparks various demographic-related problems. The essential question is how is the world managing its population dynamics?

It is natural to feel numb when one considers just how enormous the numbers are getting. To give a simple illustration of how quickly human beings have multiplied, using this PhD project as a reference point, the idea to start this project came to me in 2011 and it will be finished in summer 2017. In just 6 years, our global population has increased by 500 million to 7.5 billion, according to the projection of the United Nations (UNPD 2015). The major question for the future is whether the world will be a decent place to welcome all the new-born children. There are 767 million people living in absolute poverty, 795 million people are suffering from hunger, and 775 million adults and 67.4 million children have not received a minimum education (UNESCO 2010; World Bank 2016; FAO *et al.* 2015). Is it morally justifiable and responsible for the human race to continue to multiply while the world is arguably in a mess – politically, economically and environmentally?

I do not have the answer, or at least I do not have a normative one. Most population growth occurs in less developed countries (LDCs) as they have not completed the demographic transition, i.e. the shift from high birth and death rates to lower ones as the country is yet to fully industrialise. LDCs encounter an array of demographic-related issues,

e.g. 780 million of the hungry population is from LDCs (FAO *et al.* 2015), and Marx heavily criticises attributing poverty and unemployment to excessive reproduction of the working classes (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.61). In addition, while population explosion creates various demographic-related problems, population decline would leave us in deep trouble, with an ageing population, huge medical expenses, a shrinking workforce, and a massive pension burden in more developed countries (MDCs).

No matter whether we look at population growth or decline, demographic-related issues are directly caused by humankind. All these issues certainly have material concerns, but the problems are more about distribution and governmentality of population dynamics with the resources we have. Taking a human security perspective, while we have almost 800 million people in LDCs suffering from hunger, a food security threat (FAO *et al.* 2015), more than half of all adults in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries are overweight or obese (OECD 2014). This is obviously beyond a problem of demography but it is more of a material, moral and political issue of humanity in the international society.

Or, if we move our focus to MDCs, which usually suffer from demographic-related problems associated with population decline, it is equally “deadly” on a significant scale. Japan, for example, is facing local extinction in 896 cities, towns and villages by 2040 due to its extremely low fertility rate (Masuda 2014). The complexity of demographic-related issues is beyond material limitations, as we cannot simply displace human beings from countries suffering from population explosion to countries that are facing momentous population decline. Thus, demography should be considered as an ideational issue, a socio-political one, and more importantly a security one. It is important for us, as humankind, to find a way to address all these demographic issues in a sufficient and appropriate manner – which leads to the examination of the twin issues of population and security in this dissertation.

*1.1 The Twin Issues of Security and Population Dynamics*

There are various demographic-related problems such as famine, ageing population or health care burden that are eroding the well-being of our species, there are different security perspectives regarding demography that have led to divergences in the way that different actors treat population dynamics. To traditional security scholars, population dynamics only matters when it is measured as a variable that affects army size (Morgenthau 1948, pp.91–92), or as a variable that might cause violent conflicts with other states (Choucri 1974). Realists distinguish the high politics of national military security from low politics (Hough 2008, p.3) and therefore most of the time various demographic-related problems are regarded as low politics and have not received the attention they deserve. On the other hand, non-traditional security (NTS) scholars offer a problem-solving approach to target these demographic-related problems in their specific manner. For example, human security identifies 7 aspects of security, namely economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. Each of these categories has corresponding demographic-related problems to deal with such as unemployment, surging health care provision and environmental degradation.

Nevertheless, both approaches are merely opting for a material relationship between security and population dynamics, i.e. traditionalists are seeking to examine the causal relationship between population growth and military conflicts; while NTS scholars are putting their effort into dealing with various problems that stem from population dynamics. There is a lack of research on examining the ideational relationship between demography and security. Apart from material causality, our ideas and understanding of demography also shape the way we perceive and deal with demographic-related problems. For example, there are studies on one of the branches of demography, i.e. migration, and research into how our collective idea about immigrants led to stricter immigration control (Ibrahim 2005; Squire 2015). This thesis attempts to fill the gap in the literature and offers constructivist and post-structuralist perspectives on how our ideas of demography matters in security policy making. How can this ideational relationship be established rhetorically and what are its political implications?

In order to examine the ideational influences of demography on security, this dissertation adopts a constructivist and post-structuralist approach to identify the social, cultural, political, historical, linguistic and relational context of the constructions of threat. There is very little research that addresses how our attitudes towards population dynamics shape our security agenda and practices. Most current research merely focuses on specific demographic-related problems such as examining the relationship between migration and security, which has become one of the burning issues in the field of security studies in this decade. Most notably, there is a growing literature of how migration is being constructed as a security issue, i.e. a securitisation of migration (Bigo 2002). The studies of securitisation are, in fact, a key to understanding the techniques in order to raise demographic-related problems from low politics to high politics. This dissertation attempts to expand the scale from the securitisation of migration to the securitisation of population dynamics, which includes an array of demographic-related problems. In this way, it can shed light on how the ideational relationship between the twin issues is constructed. As Buzan *et al.* put it, security is a self-referential practice whereby for anything which threatens the existence of a referent object, no matter whether it really poses a threat or not, the manner of presentation will make it a threat (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.24). The study of securitisation of population dynamics examines how this ideational relationship can be established, and what its political implications are.

### *1.2 A Combined Framework for Analysis*

Before exploring how our ideas of population dynamics could affect our security policies, the thesis argues that population dynamics could be leveraged to securitise (as the cause of) various demographic-related threats. Instead of securitising all negative results stemming from the same (ideational) cause, it would be more effective to tackle the root of the problems. In addition, there is another special feature of population dynamics, which is as long as there are human beings, we will constantly connect our everyday problems to population dynamics, no matter whether it is population growth or population decline. Due to its immense importance and its nature of inevitability, it is rational to always consider population dynamics when formulating security policies. To put it another way, population

policy should be well managed in security terms in order to tackle the array of demographic-related problems that are successfully securitised.

In order to understand how securitising actors can ideationally frame population dynamics as a security concern, this thesis adopted a combined analytical framework of both the Copenhagen School and the Paris School to examine the securitisation of population dynamics with the case of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The securitisation framework was designed by the Copenhagen School to study the process of ideationally constructing an issue as a threat with the help of speech acts. The school regards security as a socially-constructed concept that is closely linked to survival (Buzan *et al.* 1998). Any demographic-related problems that threaten the existence of a referent object can be potentially constructed as a threat through securitisation. When the relevant audiences are convinced about the existential threats brought by population dynamics, and legitimise the use of an emergency measure, it is regarded as a successful securitisation. In order to study how the ideational relationship is created through the process of discursive construction, this thesis also adopts the Paris School approach to the provision of a practical and relational explanation of why there is a securitisation took place. By examining the everyday security practices of the emergency measure, this approach unfolds the politics of securitisation, governmentality of unease and the struggles of priorities among different actors (Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006).

This thesis selected the PRC as the case study of the securitisation of population dynamics, as the one-party state is the only country that regards population as a security concern and is the country that has legitimised the strictest ever population policy, i.e. the one-child policy. There is no doubt that the one-child policy was an emergency measure of the securitisation of population growth back in 1979, yet what are the reasons for the PRC legitimising this strict population policy? Did they have any particular security interruption that made the country act so distinctively in the matter of population dynamics? How was this ideational relationship established by the securitisation of population growth? These are very interesting and important questions that are well worth examining.

The combined framework examines both the threat construction process and the politics behind this securitisation, which brings us a comprehensive analysis of the securitisation of population dynamics with the case of the PRC. By examining the ideational relationship of how securitising actors construct population dynamics as a threat, it unfolds the beliefs, philosophy, and motives behind different securitising moves, which sheds light on the ideational connections between security and population dynamics.

This research also fills the gap of the insufficient research on non-Euro-centric securitisation, as the PRC is an Asian non-democratic socialist regime. The case study not only contributes to enriching our understanding of how the Asian non-democratic regime conducted securitisation in a socialist setting, but also develops concepts of Security Rhetoric Initiators (SRI), Self-Reinforcing Practitioners (SRP) and Discontented Relevant Audiences (DRA) to extend the securitisation framework beyond European case studies. These different actors play different roles and collaborate with each other throughout the securitisation process, formulating a socialist model of securitisation and shedding light on the further analysis of Asian authoritarian securitisation.

Although it may be argued that the manner of securitisation is hardly transferable as there are limited numbers of socialist states in the world, the discursive techniques of the threat construction offer valuable insights to learn from, which suggest how the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics could be drawn in other cases. It is hoped that the knowledge of rhetorical techniques could increase the ability of various security actors to confront these challenges in future securitisations, which could contribute to preventing numerous demographic-related threats from happening, or at least easing these pains of humankind by better population and security policies.



### *1.3 Research Questions and Objectives*

The major research question of the dissertation is *what is the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics?* Based on this main question, the following are the research objectives that this research aims to fulfil:

- 1) To examine the speech acts that the PRC used in order to establish an ideational relationship between population growth and security through a successful securitisation and introduced its emergency measure, the one-child policy.
- 2) To examine the everyday security practices of the one-child policy and the struggles of priorities among different actors, in order to reveal the politics of the prolonged securitisation
- 3) To evaluate the one-child policy as a technique for governmentality of unease and demonstrate how this constitutes a shift from securitising population growth to population decline

### *1.4 Rationale and Dissertation Structure*

This dissertation aims to identify the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics. It begins with a review of security theories, from traditional to non-traditional, and, in chapter 2, gains a general theoretical understanding of the interactions between security and population dynamics. It examines the role of demographic factors in different security theories, and also includes a detailed evaluation of the securitisation in order to reveal the ideational relationship of the twin issues. After laying a theoretical foundation, the thesis goes on to look at empirical research from both traditionalist and NTS perspectives in Chapter 3. This third chapter summarises how most of our current security research on the twin issues opts for a material relationship, and there is a missing link identified: the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics. Chapters 2 and 3 serve as a theoretical specification to develop a combined analytical

framework of constructivist (Copenhagen School) and post-structuralist (Paris School) approaches for analysis.

In chapter 4, the dissertation follows the Copenhagen School approach and first investigates the politicisation of population growth in the early PRC. It addresses questions like what was the historical background before the securitisation of population growth, how did the Chinese perceive population growth, what were the demographic-related problems the PRC suffered that facilitated the politicisation and later securitisation of population explosion, what kind of security techniques were adopted by various securitising actors in order to achieve the securitisation, i.e. to forge an ideational connection between security and population dynamics in the Chinese society.

In chapter 5, the dissertation examines the process of securitisation of population growth in the PRC and unfolds the political considerations with references to its official figures and security rhetoric. After analysing the discursive speech act that constitutes the securitisation, chapter 6 goes on to study the security practices of implementation of the one-child policy through the lens of the Paris School. It provides practical and relational explanations to understand the prolonged emergency measure and the recent shift of the one-child policy to a second-child policy, i.e. securitising population growth to decline. Chapter 7 summarises all the major findings of this research and provides a comprehensive understanding of the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC. It shed lights on why and how to raise various demographic-related threats from low politics to high politics, i.e. a security issue.

## **Chapter 2 - The Evolution of Security Theories**

---

Prior to the examination of the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics, it is important to first understand how security studies consider demography in their theories. This chapter demonstrates how security theories evolve and asks whether demography has any role in these theories. It reviews the development of security studies from traditional to critical, from constructivist to post-structuralist, and there are detailed discussions on the Copenhagen School and the Paris School that form the analytical framework of the dissertation. This literature review not only reveals the theoretical understanding of security studies but also explains why the research adopts the analytical framework to examine the ideational relationship of security and population dynamics. This chapter is considered as the theoretical foundation that enables us to articulate theoretical context for the current empirical research on demography and security in the next chapter. The combination of chapters 2 and 3 locates the missing link of the ideational relationship of population and security in both theoretical and empirical senses, and the dissertation uses the case of the PRC to illustrate how the ideational relationship can be established by a successful securitisation and the politics within.

Let us begin by asking what is the meaning of security? When you look up the word ‘security’ in various dictionaries, you will find a considerable number of definitions. For example, the Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘security’ as ‘the condition of being secure’ or ‘a means of being secure’. Collins Dictionary regards it as ‘all the measures that are taken to protect a place’, or ‘to ensure that only people with permission enter it or leave it’, or ‘a feeling of being safe and free from worry’. You may have found the above definitions vague, and you may be wondering what exactly ‘the condition of being secure’ is. Is security merely a feeling? Or if it is about physical protection, who or where are those who need to be protected? In addition, in what way is security to be achieved? And what is the role of demography in security analysis?

Throughout the history of security studies, scholars have been striving to answer all these questions. However, before investigating what security is, the first question should

be: why are we studying security? What is at stake in the meaning of security? Campbell suggested that security defines who we are, our values and who others' are (Campbell 1998). Dillon found that security defines the relationship between the protector and protected (Dillon 1996). Huysmans also regarded it as important in defining the relationship between nature, other human beings and self (Huysmans 1998a). The meaning of security carries significant weight as it is a useful indicator to prioritise an effective political agenda according to the level of threat estimated (Hough 2008).

Nonetheless, it is noted that the meaning of security changes over time, i.e. concepts and practices of security are mutually constitutive. Various scholars have found it difficult to locate the mysterious path leading to the meaning of security. For example, Wolfers highlighted the subjective nature of security which makes it hard to define effectively (Wolfers 1952). Buzan listed 12 different definitions of security at once, attempting to point out that security is a contested concept (Buzan 2007). Baldwin raised some doubt on whether security can be classified as an 'essential contested concept', and he regarded security as a 'confused or inadequately explicated concept' (Baldwin 1997). Smith called security a contested concept and further explained it as a concept that inherently contains a matter of dispute, making it impossible to come up with a neutral definition (Smith 2005). Despite these difficulties, scholars have produced their own definitions to identify their subject of research, which has led to different formulations of security analysis in the field of studies (Huysmans 1998a), and demography plays different roles in different schools of security studies.

The first part of this chapter attempts to illustrate the evolution of the meaning of security with references to prominent historical events. Dramatic changes in the international world order affect the development of mainstream security concepts, from traditional to critical security, from constructivism to post-structuralism. The review of all these security concepts illustrates how different security theories position themselves regarding the twin issues of security and population dynamics ontologically. It provides us with a theoretical understanding of in what ways population dynamics is addressed as security issues across different theories, which lay a good foundation before we proceed to

review empirical research done by mainstream security scholars in the next chapter. Following the development of critical security theories, the second part of this chapter introduces the securitisation framework which the research will adopt in the case study. By reviewing different criticisms of the framework, it provides a supplementary approach, i.e. post-structuralism, which helps to formulate a more comprehensive research design for analysing the subject of population and security.

### *2.1 The Founding of Security Studies*

In regard to the violent experience of World War I (WWI), it was rational for humankind to think: Why do countries go to war? Is war avoidable? If so, how can we achieve it? The first department of International Relations (IR) was given birth to in 1919 at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, United Kingdom (Evans and Newnham 1998). ‘International Relations is the study of all political interactions between international “actors”, which include states (represented by governments), international organisations (either intergovernmental or non-governmental)’ (Hough 2008, p.2). Security Studies is generally recognised as a sub-discipline of International Relations, one which attempts to learn from history and seek a remedy to avoid such tragedy happening again (Collins 2007).

Realism, known as the traditional approach to security, dominated the field of study before the end of the Cold War. Realists are dedicated to looking at the world ‘as it is’, rather than how they ‘would like it to be’. They are keen on analysing how the world is in a relatively scientific way: as Mearsheimer puts it, ‘realists maintain that there is an objective and knowable world, which is separate from the observing individual’ (Mearsheimer, 1994: 37-39). When realists looked at the world, both the traumatic memory of WWI and the failure to prevent WWII reinforced their pessimistic view of human nature. Realists claim that national leaders, deeply rooted in the ‘flawed nature of humanity’, are selfish and have an intense thirst for power. Since states are driven by human beings, they share the same evil desire for power. As a result, conflict will never end, because of human failings (Elman 2012). As well as the internal attribution which makes conflicts inevitable, the lack of overarching power among international society also forces states to accumulate

power, in terms of military capacity, for survival (Mearsheimer 1995). Bull also recognises that survival is the main objective for states in the anarchic international system (Bull 2002).

Realists regard the state as the overriding focus as it is the major political agent in international politics; it is also the agent authorised to accumulate power in the notion of social contract. To traditionalists, security is all about preservation of state sovereignty and territorial integrity from external military threats. As discussed above, driven by both internal evil nature and external anarchy, states always have a tendency to increase their might. The emphasising of a strong state can be traced back to the thoughts of philosophers such as Hobbes and Rousseau (Hough 2008; Waltz 1959; Williams 1989; Williams 1996). Hobbes used the cut-throat competition in international archery to illustrate the importance of pursuing a strong state (Leviathan), as it is the only way under the social contract for the state to save its people from physical harm by outsiders (Hobbes 1651). The state distinguishes its member from strangers by offering the former physical protection (Walzer 1984). Rousseau suggests the notion of General Will, which is a collectivism that forces an individual to bow to a particular authority for the sake of a coherent and strong state sovereignty. These state-centric philosophies, as the background of that particular era did shape, to a certain extent, the realists' assumptions and the initial development of traditional security studies. In traditional perspective, individual security is to be safeguarded by the state, and therefore it is necessary to have a secure state to begin with. Without a secure state, there is no way to guarantee individual well-being. Morgenthau stressed that as long as the state survives, citizens' interests can be safeguarded by the strong state (Morgenthau 1948).

With the realists emphasising the importance of states, security in that period simply refers to national security due to its immense importance to the national interest (Wolfers 1952). In fact, the word 'security' was inter-replaceable with both national security and national interest. In a world where overarching power is absent, states are sceptical of others' intentions and forced to rely on themselves, i.e. self-help. The only way for a state to be secure in this anarchy is by maximising its military might. States engage in this relative power competition due to fear and mistrust among each other. This concept is well

illustrated by the security dilemma that when one state increases its military power and becomes relatively secure, it makes other states comparatively insecure. Mearsheimer summarised the idea and restated it in one simple sentence - 'States are potentially dangerous to each other' (Mearsheimer 1995). Krause and Williams further add that the realist rational military rivalry is 'both the source and the outcome of that anarchy' (Krause and Williams 1996). In addition, imperfect information on others' military capacity triggers a fear of the unknown: people are afraid that their state sovereignty will be overridden by a stronger state someday. Machiavelli regards it as a zero-sum game that the sum of all actors' gain and loss always equals zero (Machiavelli 1988), which also implies that there is no neutral position internationally and every state has to arm itself for its own survival.

### *2.1.1 Traditional Security and Population Dynamics*

In order to maintain their survival, states are opting for military might while population is regarded as one of the prominent factors determining the potential military power of a state. Morgenthau expresses his view on the twin issues of population and national power that 'no country can remain or become a first-rate power which does not belong to the more populous nations of the earth' (Morgenthau 1948, pp.91–92). Traditional realists consider population as assets to states in both military and economic terms. On the military side, it is necessary for a state to have a considerable number of people for it to build a large army. Therefore states with large populations have the advantage and there is a higher possibility for them to become great powers (Davis 1954; Organski and Organski 1961). On the economic side, population as manpower contributes to both agricultural and industrial development, earning a good fortune for the military building of the country. To Mearsheimer, both population and wealth are the cornerstones of nation power (Mearsheimer 2001, p.61). In his perspective, it is assumed that states with abundant wealth simply imply a large population maintaining the nation.

Although realists have emphasised the importance of having a relatively large population, the relationship between population and national power is not as conventional as the larger the population, the higher the national power. It relies on the nation's ability

to translate population into economic and military benefits, i.e. latent power. For example, India and the PRC have abounded manpower where their demographic bonus boosts the productivity of labour-intensive industries and thus the countries' economies, making them rapidly rising countries. As well as quantity, the quality of the population also matters for translating manpower into national power (Sprout and Sprout 1945, p.39). Organski and his colleagues introduce the concept of 'effective population', measuring to what extent people's skills are contributing to national development (Organski *et al.* 1972). The education level of the population has great influences on the state productivity, as knowledge is required to handle complex machinery and the latest communication technologies. The economic benefit brought by a huge educated population can lay a solid foundation for the building of great armies. Mearsheimer raises the concept of 'mobilisable wealth' referring to 'the economic resources a state has at its disposal to build military forces' (Mearsheimer 2001: 62). Glaser also comes up with similar ideas in measuring the ratio of a state's resources, e.g. population, wealth and technological level, being converted into the states' might (Glaser 2010, pp.40–42). Generally, demographic factors, both in terms of quality and quantity, are important in building up a strong army; as the former affects the potential size of military forces and the latter determines the abilities in handling modern weapons. Therefore, traditionally, realist ideas encourage states to have a larger population in order to maximise their military capacity for survival in the anarchic international environment.

Although the above discussions have summarised the factors causing intense military rivalry, heavy arms and large armies do not necessarily lead to war. The outbreak of a war is usually because one state believes it has a military advantage over another, and therefore uses it in 'an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will' (Clausewitz 1976, p.75). It is a rational political instrument and also be viewed as 'a continuation of political intercourse' (Clausewitz 1976, p.605). Nonetheless, even war is based on rational calculations that predicted one side would win easily, it is always prolonged. This is because states are subject to the bound rationality that may overestimate their own strength or miscalculate others' from imperfect information. Demographic profile is one of the indicators to measure others' military capacities and relative power. A country with a larger



population or with a rising demographic trend, in fact, poses fear to neighbouring states. Morgenthau regarded ‘a country, for instance, inferior in the size of the population to its competitor, will view with alarm a declining rate of growth if the population of its competitor tends to increase more rapidly’ (Morgenthau 1948, p.92). Mearsheimer echoes this and further adds that states keep an eye on other populous states as these states are supposed having higher latent power for army building (Mearsheimer 2001, p.45). It is rational for a state to launch an attack on states with rapid population growth before these rising states have fully translated their demographic advantages into military might. War is a possible instrument to achieve political ambition (Sheehan 2012). However, it is obviously a Pyrrhic victory, proven by the history of two catastrophic world wars.

## *2.2 Broadening Traditional Security in the changing world order*

Realism as the orthodoxy of security studies has a long history of development and numerous realist scholars have different traditional approaches to security (Mearsheimer 2001, pp.22–23; Morgan 2007; Elman 2012), yielding various predictions for international politics. After drawing out some basic assumptions that realists commonly shared and looking at how classical realists regarded demographic factors in their security analyses, the following will go through a few different realist perspectives, some of which have more in-depth consideration upon the relationship between population dynamics and national security. Even though realists generally focus on maintaining the protection of states from external threats, scholars started to realise that there are some related issues such as economic conditions, demographic factor, and natural resource supplies which are also prominent in national security. Krause and Williams have listed the terms that these realists used, such as ‘common, cooperative, collective, comprehensive’, to increase the comprehensiveness of state-centric security theory (Krause and Williams 1996, p.230).

Choucri views national security as a function of Military Security (MS), Regime Security (RS) and Structural Security (SS), i.e.  $NS = f(MS, RS, SS)$  (Choucri 2002, pp.99–100). For Military Security, it is obvious that it is mainly related to military capacity to survive external threats. The other two elements Choucri suggests, i.e. Regime Security

and Structural Security, have taken domestic considerations and the concept of internal threat into traditional security analysis. Structural security refers to a state's ability to protect the resilience of life-supporting properties and the prevailing sources of livelihood, which means that people's well-being in a broad sense is being considered as a factor in national security. Failure to provide structural security may lead to social instability and civil conflict, threatening the legitimacy of the government, resulting in regime insecurity.

Morgan suggests similar concepts that national security consists of physical safety, autonomy, development, and rule (Morgan 2007, pp.14–15). While safety and autonomy focus on military strength and state sovereignty, national development and rule also bring local affairs into the analysis of national security's analysis. National development, including socio-economic considerations and government policies, affects the rule of a political regime, which is consistent with Choucri's ideas of Regime Security and Structural Security. Arase has specified that governments, especially politically fragile ones, rely on economic development for their legitimacy (Arase 2010, p.810). This broadens the realist perspective by considering the relationship between domestic issues and national security (Baldwin 1995, p.122), which enjoys a higher explanatory power in traditional security analysis. Population dynamics is being treated as one of the domestic issues that may affect traditional security in terms of the utilisation of natural resources, labour supply, and military population. In Choucri's framework, population dynamics is, in fact, the main variable affecting Structural Security. Regarding realist perspectives on population, resources, environment and conflict, the next chapter will review various security analyses of demography and security in detail.

Besides adding domestic considerations to broaden the realist perspective, traditional views on power distribution and world stability are also evolving over time. Classical realism described a multipolar world in which every state is on its own in the anarchic structure. States do not rely on alliance but focus on strengthening their military power alone as there is no ground for mutual trust. These nations contain each other and form a balance of power that could be easily broken for various reasons, e.g. raw materials, territorial disputes and demographic trends. After WWII, it was predicted that the Soviet

Union and its satellite states would have a continued increase in population which might eventually exceed the entire population of Western and Central Europe (Morgenthau 1948, pp.93–94). The Cold War was initiated not only by the ideological conflict but also by the anxiety caused by population growth. It is also indicated that at the time population size was still generally recognised as one of the major elements to national power. Corresponding to the background of the Cold War, Waltz suggests a bipolar world order would be a more stable system to achieve peace, i.e. absence of war (Waltz 1964). He used two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to illustrate his idea that the world was safer when these two were containing each other.

Other than the anxieties brought by the population growth of states, Nuclear weapons also play an important role contributing to the bipolar world order. Lebow comments the invention of nuclear weapon restrict traditional security studies from going beyond (Lebow 1988, p.508), as its destructive power is too massive that leave no benefit in starting a great war. Both power blocs adopted nuclear deterrence policy known as ‘Mutual Assured Destruction’ (MAD) and did not have the incentive to go for a massive war which may trigger a need for using nuclear weapons. Scholars generally agree that nuclear weapons avoid the outbreak of total war (Morgan 2000; Tannenwald 2005) and restricted modern warfare in a relatively small scale, which requires conventional troop deployment and maintains a role for having a certain amount of population for military power. Moreover, even a nuclear weapon is dropped, conventional troops are still necessary for occupying enemy’s cities after the nuclear attack (Organski and Organski 1961). Snyder further adds that traditional security studies should move forward and focus on ‘how weapons of mass destruction could be used as a policy instrument without risking a nuclear exchange’ (Snyder 2011).

During the Cold War, it was a safer world, with fewer serious conflicts compared with the anarchical multipolar world wars period. The above discussions have stated that weapons of mass destruction did make a great contribution to formulating a new world order which no one had ever thought of, i.e. a bipolar world order. Nonetheless, history didn’t stop there. All a sudden, this bipolar world collapsed – the Cold War was ended. This

went beyond the predictions of most realists. With the United States of America still standing after in the Cold War, the resulting unipolar structure was the most stable world order we had ever had. Waltz recognises the change of world order, yet he insisted the unipolar world would not last long as there would be other states that would rise and challenge the leading state (Waltz 1993). He regards realism as still playing an important role in security study as the international environment remains anarchic (Waltz 2000, p.5). Even nuclear weapons had changed the international arena into political and economic ones; all these changes are within the realist explanation. Therefore, Waltz claims, realism as the foundation of security studies had not been shaken.

### *2.3 The Fading Away of Realism and the New War thesis*

Despite the fact that realism still has its explanatory power over global politics, the failure to predict the end of the Cold War has weakened the belief in state-centric security. The importance of traditional security is fading away for two reasons – that the likelihood of total war threatening state survival has greatly diminished, and that globalisation has emerged in these peaceful days and is eroding state sovereignty, leading to various deadly threats to individuals and giving rise to critical approaches to security. These critical approaches have quite a different view regarding population and security than the realist approach. This section is going to unfolding the fading away of realism by the New War thesis.

As the world was heading to a unipolar world order after the Cold War, the possibility of a total war arguably decreased. Since warfare is one of the fundamental pillars of traditional security, these changes have raised reasonable doubt about the realist perspective and shaken its fundamental importance in security studies. Kaldor and her colleagues captured these changes and characterised them as a new type of ‘warfare’, which is moving away from the traditional perspective (Kaldor *et al.* 1978; Kaldor and Vashee 1997). The New War thesis recognises four changes in warfare: 1) a weak or failed states which fail to maintain state capacity under decolonisation and globalisation; 2) adding in non-state actors like guerrilla armies, terrorists, warlords, and criminals; 3)

reduction in war scale and 4) increased civilian casualties due to blurred distinction between public and private authority (Kaldor 1999).

The construction of the New War thesis was correlated with the twin issues of decolonisation and globalisation after WWII and the Cold War, which led to surging civil wars and various security threats to individuals. Kaldor suggests that on the one hand the wars of decolonisation were ‘harbingers’ leading to state failure in LDCs (Kaldor 1999, pp.29–30), while on the other hand globalisation erodes territory-based sovereignty. Both processes undermine state capacity which facilitates (transnational) crimes, corruption and organised violence (in terms of civil and proxy wars) in decolonised states (Kaldor and Vashee 1997; Jung 2002; Newman 2004). These state vulnerabilities give rise to non-state actors pursuing power illegally, challenging current state legitimacy to (re)construct a better identity and life for themselves. This kind of identity politics is mostly conducted by private armies, insurgency groups, gangs and ethnic minorities, and can easily lead to civil wars. The New Wars thesis uses this logic to explain many intra-state identity wars such as those in Bosnia, Kosovo, the former USSR, Central Africa and South Asia (Dodds 2000). In contrast to traditional interstate war, the identities of civilians and combatants were blurred in these civil wars as non-state actors were among the main combatants against weak state regimes. These new wars are a mixture of war (violence for political reasons as Clausewitz suggested), organised crime (violence by private groups for various reasons) and violations of human rights that went beyond state-centric security (Kaldor 1999).

Kaldor and her colleagues also identified how globalisation erodes state authority. Weak states in the worst cases would break down due to the transnational connections of (illegal) military rebellion flowing across its border more easily (Kaldor *et al.* 1978). Hughes presented a similar view by investigating the relationship between globalisation and security: ‘Globalisation is a process which increasingly reconfigures social space away from and beyond notions of delineated territory, and transcends existing physical and human borders imposed upon social interaction’ (Hughes 2001, pp.408–409). This notion suggests that in the globalisation era, territorial boundaries have less power to restrict the flows of social forces from going global. Therefore non-state actors have more opportunity

to gain 'power' globally under the declining control of the state, which to a certain extent leads to a higher probability of new wars, as Kaldor suggested.

Due to the convenience brought about by globalisation, non-state actors such as guerrilla armies, terrorists and warlords can easily transcend state borders and commit various transnational crimes to fund their identity wars. These transnational crimes, including drugs and human trafficking, piracy, arms smuggling and terrorism, are serious threats endangering not only states but also individuals. The idea that non-state actors can threaten state sovereignty is a new trend that realists fail to recognise. More importantly, local threats of this kind can escalate to become regional threats due to their transnational nature. To address these various threats, the ASEAN states have signed a 'Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime' that highlighted the seriousness of these crimes to both states and ordinary people (ASEAN 2017). The growth of organised transnational crime increasingly undermines state sovereignty, and these non-state actors have increasing capacity to subvert the legitimacy of government (especially in weak states) through their huge economic interest and pursuit of illegal arms (Dupont 1998). The New War thesis suggested a (re)construction of cosmopolitan law to bring a positive political vision over these war zones, where the principles of these laws can limit the violence caused by identity politics, providing alternative means of settling disputes other than a civil war (Shaw 2000).

While globalisation empowers some individuals and endangers most others (and their weak governments), Martin and his colleagues have conducted a research to test whether trade has an effect on reducing military conflicts (Martin *et al.* 2008). Their results indicate that a pair of countries with close bilateral trade is less likely to go war with each other due to the high bilateral dependency. However when there is a higher degree of globalisation, i.e. both states increase their multilateral trade internationally, the reduced bilateral dependency will increase the likelihood of military conflicts with its neighbour as the opportunity cost of bilateral conflict has gradually decreased. They use the data set of the Correlates of War project to calculate the average distance of military conflicts and prove that war scale has reduced in distance. A higher degree of globalisation indicated fewer great wars yet more minor conflicts. This result echoes the notion that globalisation actually

has a direct effect on the reduction of war scale. Some scholars have different names for these changes in warfare such as ‘postmodern’ era warfare (Sheehan 2012), or ‘multi-dimensions of warfare from major to minor powers, interstate to intra-states’ (Levy *et al.* 2001). The term ‘new wars’ is an attempt to distinguish recent conflicts from the ‘old wars’, emphasising that the war scale, actors, and means of war have changed to a great extent since WWII and the Cold War – a new era that traditional approaches to ‘security of states from external military threats’ is way too narrow that need to be enlarged in terms of both referent objects and threats in security analysis, and therefore leading to the establishment of various critical security approaches that demography holds a larger role within. The following section will illustrate different critical approaches to security and demonstrate the different security actors and referent objects, including population dynamics, in these security analyses.

#### *2.4 The Rise of Critical Approaches to Security*

Although the orthodoxy of security studies still enjoys its explanatory power in international politics as many realists suggested (Waltz 2000), security scholars are trying to come up with alternative approaches corresponding to the rapid and dramatic changes after the Cold War. As discussed, the absence of total war in the post-Cold War period facilitates the free flow of products, people, ideas and capital which we called ‘globalisation’. When states have less power to control these flows over their borders, individuals are exposed to an array of ‘new’ threats which do not respect national borders, e.g. pandemic, pollution, economic downturn, refugees and population dynamics. In fact, none of these threats to individuals is new, yet these threats are not generally included in traditional security perspective as most realists regarded them as irrelevant to state survival (Newman 2004). This section reviews the paradigm shift from traditional security to critical security, and the following sections will demonstrate various critical approaches to security including the Welsh School, Human Security, the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. The review of security theories in this chapter not only serves as a literature review but also provides comparison and evaluation in a way that facilitates the formation of the combined analytical framework of the Copenhagen School and the Paris School in

the next chapter.

Regarding the broadening of security studies, there are some neo-realists who include certain domestic considerations in their security analysis as discussed. However, most of their focus is on merely the survival of the state, not caring about the well-being of individuals. As Wyn-Jones noted, the root problem of realism is the ‘fetishisation of state’ (Wyn-Jones 1999). Traditionalists are trying to keep the focus of security studies as a ‘study of threat, use, and control of military forces’ and reveal their realist perspective in seeking ‘cumulative knowledge’ in the role of military force for state survival (Walt 1991, p.212). Walt further adds that including any non-military element in the study is analytically mistaken and politically irresponsible. Kolodziej comments that realism ‘exempts the theorist from responsibility for explaining - or even expecting – systemic change’ (Kolodziej 1992, p.431).

As traditionalists insisted that security studies was concerned merely with the security of states from external threats, some scholars found it inadequate to explain international politics and thus they developed a wider concept of security (Brown and Ainley 2009, p.238). These new approaches to security focus on new referent objects, actors and level of analysis correlating with the changing international politics. Williams and Krause point out that the rise of individual security issues after the Cold War, e.g. identity wars, developmental issues and the empowerment of non-state actors, can also contribute to the development of security studies. The attempt to examine the relationship between security and population dynamics in this dissertation is also, in the same way, trying to contribute to the development of the field.

Traditional assumption that the state is the foundation for security is inadequate to deal with all these ‘new’ issues (Krause and Williams 1997). These individual security issues have been in various critical approaches, e.g. Critical Theory, human security, constructivism, and post-structuralism, aiming to bring about a paradigm shift in security studies and a contrast with traditional security. As listed above there are many analytical approaches to security studies which have to be labelled as ‘critical’; these theories in a



broad sense are regarded as an orientation to enlarge the construction of alternative theories over security studies, rather than a traditional Marxist retical label of critical approaches (except the Welsh School's Critical Theory). The latter half of this chapter reviews the critical approaches to security and justifies the application of the combined approach of both the Copenhagen School and the Paris School in the case study of this research.

In summary, what are the differences between traditional and critical theory? Both Horkheimer and Cox have provided their answers to this question. According to Cox, (traditional) problem-solving theory is 'a guide to help solve the problems posed within the terms of the particular perspective which was a point of departure', whereas critical theory 'opens up the possibility of choosing a different valid perspective from which the problematic becomes one of creating an alternative world' (Cox 1981). Horkheimer highlights that traditional theory followed a 'natural sciences' approach, formulating sociological laws to explain and predict the causal nexus between historical events objectively (Horkheimer 1975). In contrast, he regards critical theory as an approach that focuses on the subjective view of actors. Knowing how people interpret historical events and their correlated behaviour helps us to understand the world through internal beliefs and emotions.

Applied to security studies, realism is a problem-solving theory that focuses on states' practices in securing themselves from external military threats. It utilises scientific methods that 'meet standards of logic and evidence' (Walt 1991) to explain international politics (anarchy) and make policy prescription (power maximising). The problem is, however, this traditional approach formulates a rather ideological theory, which only fits in a particular era, i.e. the era before the end of the Cold War. Just as Derrida suggested, there is always a divergence between the idea of justice and the actual practice of law (Derrida 1992), i.e. the former will evolve over time while the latter cannot be amended frequently. This also happens in security studies: the idea of security and security practice are left behind by the changes in international politics. Therefore, critical approaches to security arise and facilitate the development of alternative theories as a 'continuing process of historical change' (Cox 1981) and bring about a paradigm shift in the discipline.

In a world in which external military threats are no longer the dominant security concern, it is obviously unrealistic for any country to focus on traditional security alone and ignore security issues that threaten individuals' well-being. A comprehensive security agenda should consist of both traditional and non-traditional security (NTS) issues. This idea can be traced back to the 1980s when Ullman was trying to redefine security as 'an action or sequence of events that 1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state or 2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to a government of a state, or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state' (Ullman 1983, p.133).

Ullman suggests an array of domestic issues that should also be taken into account to sustain a state regime, as it makes sense for a nation's security politics to encompass both domestic and international issues, demonstrating its concern for citizens' well-being. If states fail to maintain their citizens' security, domestic issues may escalate to become a national or even regional security threat, e.g. civil wars or various transnational crimes. In this way, critical approaches offered a vertical type of analysis to capture the escalation of these threats. The intelligent lens can move vertically upward from state level to regional security (Waeber *et al.* 1993; Buzan and Waeber 2003), international security (Buzan and Hansen 2011), global security (Levy 1995) or ultimate security (Myers 1993), and move downward to human security (UNDP 1994). It moves away from the narrow state-centric approach and place individuals as one of the most prominent referent objects, which sometimes considers states as a threat rather than a solution. As Lodgaard remarked, 'outwardly aggressive and inwardly repressive regimes can be major sources of human insecurity' (Lodgaard 2000).

## *2.5 Critical Theory and the Welsh School*

The shifting of (primary) referent object is one of the major changes common to every critical security approach. Among critical security scholars, Booth raised a significant question to illustrate this change: 'Can Hitler, Stalin or Saddam Hussein among the primary

referents of theory or practice?’ He argued that a government regime merely is merely a means to achieve individual security. Therefore, it is illogical for realists to put the means (state) in front of the ends (individuals) (Booth 1991a, pp.319–320). Unlike realists who have the state as the overriding concern, he regarded individuals as the ultimate referent object in security studies.

Booth further defined the meaning of security, which facilitated the later development of the Critical Theory and the Welsh School. In his article ‘Security and Emancipation’, he regards security as ‘absence of threats’ (Booth 1991a, p.319). He further connects security to emancipation, i.e. achieving security is a way to emancipate people from arrays of constraints including both traditional and NTS threats. The philosophical origin of the idea of emancipation is from Marxism, where Marx noted that western philosophy had been detached from problems of daily human affairs in pursuit of ‘eternal truths’. Marx suggested philosophers should produce knowledge to challenge the dominant ideologies and free people from the status quo relationship of domination and subordination: ‘the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it’ (Marx 1888).

Critical Theory leveraged the idea by linking security and emancipation, which contributes to the changing focus of security studies towards an individual perspective, instead of a discipline that merely serves the state. Booth emphasises ‘Security is what we make of it. It is an epiphenomenon inter-subjectively created. Different worldviews and discourses about politics deliver different views and discourses about security’ (Booth 1997, p.106). This opens the discussion for various actors to define security according to the constraints they are facing, ranging from ‘colonial world, women, youth, the proletariat, appetites of all sorts, homosexuals, consumers and thought’ (Booth 1991a, p.321). Population dynamics in this sense can also be one of the constraints threatening individuals’ well-being.

Critical Theory regarded security and emancipation as two sides of the same coin and formulated a normative security theory encouraging people to ‘politicise security’ for their

well-being (Booth 2005). On the one hand, it carries the Marxist retical symbol that rejects the state as the key guardian of individuals' security, on the other hand, its positive view of security makes security a political instrument to free individuals from non-war violence in the globalisation era. Security is, therefore, something we should pursue, i.e. 'absence of the threat of (involuntary) pain, fear, hunger, and poverty is an essential element in the struggle for emancipation' (Wyn-Jones 1999, p.126). Bilgin has summarised the contributions of the Welsh school as that it de-centres states and redefines referent objects, allows the level of security analysis go above and below state level and considers arrays of insecurities faced by different referent objects (Bilgin 2012).

Despite Critical Theory's contributions, Neufeld argues that the theory is vulnerable to charges of utopianism and elitism (Neufeld 2004). He points out that the theory is not articulated 'in the context of historical space and time' in its security analysis. He follows Cox's path and fills up the context by illustrating how internationalised states and the hyper-liberal global order put economic elites and political elites in the same interest bloc, rendering the interest of individuals' security and making it difficult to achieve (Neufeld 2004, p.110). Nonetheless, Bilgin argues that this is a stereotype created by people who consider that critical theory is lacking in historical context and does not serve the function of problem-solving (Bilgin 2012). She has summarised Cox and Booth's view that 'Critical theory does engage with present problems but without losing sight of the historical processes that have produced them' (Cox 1981, p.130), and proposes alternatives that are 'feasible transformations of the existing world' (Booth 1991b). In fact, the founding of Critical Theory was an attempt to replace the misrepresentative state-centric security in the globalisation era, as discussed above.

However, Critical Theory lacks a clear structure or framework to specify which NTSs they are focusing on and in what way these threats can be resolved. This inadequacy makes it difficult to address specific individuals' security issues as it requires much effort to politicise an issue, say population dynamics, as threats to a particular group of people. Therefore, this dissertation moves forward to review other critical approaches that could be more specific about NTS threats related to population dynamics.

## *2.6 Human Security and the United Nations Development Project (UNDP)*

Along with Critical Theory, Human Security is another critical approach which transforms the main referent object from states to human beings (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, p.4). Unlike the Welsh School, which focuses on how we politicise security and use it as a means to emancipate individuals, Human Security focuses more on practical security policies, aiming at freeing people from fear and want in seven specific categories, i.e. food, health, environmental, economic, personal, community and political security (UNDP 1994). It involves a higher degree of discussion and participation in the policy-making process, as the idea was raised in the publication of the United Nation Development Program Report (UNDP) in 1994 entitled ‘New Dimensions of Human Security’.

The seven categories of human security are correlated with the sub-organisations and programs within the UN, for example, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) & the World Food Program (WFP) (Food Security), the World Health Organisation (WHO) & the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (Health Security), UN Environmental Program (UNEP), World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Economic Security), UN Commission on the Status of Women (Community Security) and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (Political Security), sharing the same people-centric security perspective across various issues. Within these seven categories, it is not difficult to identify the NTS threats related to population dynamics, for example, the relationship between food security and population growth. The brief review of human security here attempts to demonstrate that there are in fact various states and international organisations dealing with demographic-related threats. These new considerations alter the composition of security agendas in its member states, which provides a new kind of security thinking that considers people’s well-being at both policy and administrative level. This theoretical review also enables the further examination of how the NTS approaches solving demographic-related issues in the next chapter.

Human security has highlighted internal and transnational threats to individuals which traditional security fails to recognise. As Thomas and Tow put it, ‘state as a “secure” state

untroubled by contested territorial boundaries could still be inhabited by insecure people' (Thomas and Tow 2002, p.178). Other than fighting a visible military enemy, human security reveals significant concerns in protecting people from 'threats without enemies' (Hamill 1998). For example, global warming is one of the threats specified in environmental security to which military power barely offers any solution (Wirtz 2012). Human security has contributed in specifying a list of NTSs to contrast with traditional security. The UNDP regards these threats as universal security concerns that everyone in the world is more or less suffering from regardless of where they are. These cross-border threats bring nations into an interdependent relationship and increase regional and global cooperation to fight the enemies of the entire humankind. Not only states but also other actors at different levels are helping to deal with these transnational threats. Oxfam, Greenpeace and Red Cross are very good examples of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that contribute to various human security efforts both regionally and globally. The notion of people-centric security emphasises that various actors and referent objects should be included in security analysis, as 'security is a human condition. To define it purely in terms of state bodies whose aim it is to help secure their state and people in a certain dimension, rather than the people whose security is at stake, is both odd and nonsensical' (Hough 2008, p.9).

It is a myth that a country at a higher development level would suffer less NTSs. The NTSs that human security has categorised have multiple faces that are not restricted to LDCs, but are also present in MDCs. These threats have both a domestic and a transnational nature. As discussed, realists traditionally regarded domestic threats as "low politics"; yet Ayoob points out that in the era of globalisation, these internal threats are in fact the principal security concern for most LDCs (Ayoob 1997). One reason is that the LDCs are facing arrays of NTSs such as poverty, food & water shortage, physical violence, environmental degradation and infectious disease, which are actually more deadly threats than military conflicts. Another reason is that LDC governments rely heavily on people's well-being to maintain their legitimacy. Failure to tackle local threats may trigger a series of threats, leading to a disaster for people's well-being and posing a threat to the region.

Human security threats have two faces: a domestic and a transnational one. In the era of globalisation, national states are more closely tied up as they depend on each other in global trade and international division of labour. Therefore, when one state fails to handle its domestic security issues properly, the issues may escalate to become regional security problems in various forms. This is why the UNDP put states together to handle these threats collectively. Below is an example of how a local economic security problem in Indonesia emerged as a regional security threat in terms of piracy, which threatens economic, environmental, and personal security.

The Straits of Malacca, with approximately one-third of the world's trade and half of the world's oil passing through, has great strategic importance to the regional economy and energy supply. Pirates are active around the complex coastlines and trading ships are being attacked while passing through. Although this looks like a prominent issue of traditional security, these pirates are untouchable by the state military as most attacks occurred within the 12-mile limit of a state's territorial waters or not on the high seas. This example reveals the powerlessness of a single state, and facing transnational threats like this requires inter-state cooperation. In fact, piracy in Southeast Asia was less prevalent in the past. However, there was a significant surge after 1997, which is generally believed to have been related to the Asian Financial Crisis in the same year (Raymond 2005). The harsh economic environment in Southeast Asia had actually weakened the legitimacy of the Indonesian government. Political instability had made Indonesian's lives even harder and piracy is a means for people living in the coastal area to supplement their inadequate income. Tracking the suspected perpetrators of pirate attacks, led to several Indonesian-Chinese bosses being caught, and some of them were even from Indonesia military forces. These significant piracy problems across Southeast Asia are externalities of internal threats, i.e. poor economic conditions and political instability in Indonesia.

When the concept of human security is applied to the piracy in Southeast Asia, it is noted that various categories of human security threats are apparent, i.e. economic, personal and environmental security. Economic security refers to a secure economic status of individuals; in this case Indonesia was in a tough situation due to the 1997 Asian

Economic Crisis. Poor locals robbed ships and kidnapped crew members for goods and ransom payments. Personal security of the crew members was being threatened as they were facing physical violence from these pirates. This particular threat was lifted when their employer was willing to pay the ransom, which is another economic security threat. On the other hand, these attacks not only posed economic and personal threats in the Straits of Malacca but also brought an environmental challenge to these waters. Environmental security is eroded by environmental degradation and damage to the ecosystem due to various kinds of pollution and over-development. There have been cases of oil spilling during pirate attacks which could have resulted in an environmental disaster. For example, a Japanese supertanker, the *Nagasaki Spirit*, collided with the *Ocean Blessing* in the Straits of Malacca following a pirate interception. 12, 000 tonnes of oil spilt, yet, fortunately, the light oil evaporated rapidly in the tropical heat. It is clear from this case that when a state fails to handle its domestic issues, even if it is just one particular issue like the economic hardship in Indonesia, it can trigger a series of security threats to the region or even to the globe. The concept of human security is, in fact, a milestone for states and international organisations that cooperate to confront the issues that threaten individuals' survival (freedom from fear) and well-being (freedom from wants).

Although human security has made a great contribution in specifying a universal list of NTSs, it seems to regard nearly everything as a security threat, which makes it difficult for policymakers to prioritise the numerous "threats" in their security agendas. The all-encompassing approach does not make a clear distinction between 'threats' and 'issues' (Paris 2001), and thus presents great difficulty for resource allocation. Along with the criticism of its effectiveness, different scholars have also pointed out that human security is 'the dog that didn't bark' (Chandler 2008) and is an 'underdevelopment paradigmatic approach' that 'the idea of "threat" needs to be identified with more precision...to accrue analytical credibility' (Thomas and Tow 2002).

Even though human security has included almost everything in its concept, the role of population dynamics has not been stressed or well analysed. Population dynamics can lead to arrays of NTSs in both LDCs and MDCs, such as economic, food, health and



environmental problems. Human security is mainly focused on solving these problems rather than investigating the relationship between population dynamics and NTSs. The next chapter will specify how this rational problem-solving approach categorises various demographic-related threats, which supports the securitisation of population dynamics of this research. It argues that demography can be constructed as (the cause of) various NTSs, and which requires the carrying out of securitisation of population dynamics to unfold the ideational relationship of the twin issues.

### *2.7 Constructivism*

The weakness of human security has drawn scholars' attention to finding a way to distinguish threats from security issues. However, this brought the conversation back to the meaning of security, as a definition is required for the differentiation of threats. The beginning of this chapter discussed the difficulties in defining security due to its subjective and contested nature. Nonetheless, constructivism found its own way by assuming security to be a social construction which is subjective and mutually constituted. The term 'constructivism' first appeared in the book *World of Our Making* (Onuf 1989). The approach was then widely applied in the field of international relations, combined with the notion of critical theories that change is possible with the assumption that everything is socially constructed (Fierke 2007, p.56; McDonald 2012). The idea epistemologically broke through the traditional assumption that security is an objective condition which can be observed empirically. It brought in new possibilities that the meaning of security can actually vary due to different social contexts across various societies (Weiner 1992, pp.110–111). Collapses of the distinction between 'subject and object', 'observer and observed' and 'protector and protected' occur in constructivist security analysis, which is an inter-subjective process of reification of threat. Security in this sense is also an identity constructed in society, distinguishing who and what to protect and contributing to prioritising security agendas accordingly. In this sense, it solves the problem encountered by the all-encompassing human security as it is our ideational relationship towards an issue which socially constructs it as a security threat. Therefore, it is pertinent to examine how this ideational relationship is/can be established, and this research focuses particularly on

studying the twin issues of security and population dynamics.

Constructivism has provided an alternative answer to security which is particularly useful to specify the issues that people currently regard as a threat. Yet the subjective approach to security is criticised as blurring the military core of security studies. In fact, the social constructivism approach can also apply to traditional security threats, revealing that the structure of international politics is not predetermined but constructed inter-subjectively (Adler 1997). For example, Weldes argues that ‘national interest’ is a social construction by state officials to serve their political ends in the international arena (Weldes 1996); Fierke has questioned the realists’ assumption that war is inevitable by demonstrating how war is distinguished from violence and constructed as rule-based ‘activities’ through social construction for specific political purposes (Fierke 2007, p.57). Fierke adds that viewing war as a social construction contributes to relaxing realists’ assumptions about flawed human nature and the inevitability of wars. It is merely a perception that the anarchy is unchangeable. ‘Anarchy is what states make of it’ (Wendt 1992, p.395), Wendt argues. He points out that the constructivist approach provides more flexibility by looking into the particular contexts of global structural changes, e.g. the end of the Cold War, and how states conceive, react and construct a new international world order. This approach to international security enjoys greater explanatory power than the traditional perspective in dealing with the constantly changing international politics. The ‘war on terror’ is an excellent example to show how to legitimise military action over non-state actors, which realists fail to.

The September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the United States triggered the US military actions in the ‘war on terror’. In the realist perspective, security should focus on how military capacity protects states from external threats, while non-state actors have no place in their security analysis. In fact, terrorism was a crime tackled using normal police techniques but not armed force before 2001 (Lutz and Lutz 2007, pp.290–291). Even setting aside the fact that realism cannot explain how terrorists as non-state actors can provide a threat to a sovereign state which requires a military response, there is little clarity as to whether these terrorists are external or internal threats to states.

Combining these two points, there should be additional political movement out of the realist perspective to justify the ‘war on terror’, which is the American social identity construction by former US President George W. Bush. Peker has analysed Bush’s speeches related to national security and foreign policy and revealed that Bush was using his speeches to re-articulate American social identity specifically as ‘a nation at war’, ‘a nation under God’, and ‘a nation of democratic-capitalist values’ to construct the legitimacy of war against Al Qaeda (Peker 2006). McDonald regards security as ‘a site of negotiation and contestation, in which actors compete to define the identity and values of a particular group in such a way as to provide a foundation for political action’ (McDonald 2012). Constructivists argue that security is socially constructed and mutually constituted, and the following section will introduce the Copenhagen School’s securitisation framework to illustrate how an issue is constructed as a security threat.

## *2.8 The Copenhagen School and the Securitisation framework*

In what way do we make an issue a threat? The Copenhagen School has formulated a framework to outline the process of how an issue rhetorically constructed, i.e. securitised, as a threat, resolved by the implementation of emergency measures and eventually de-securitised as a normal politics. The school was founded by the members of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) including Buzan, Waever and de Wilde. While one could argue that constructivists make everything security and blur the core of security studies, the securitisation framework was designed as a neutral analytical tool for constructivists to determine what and how an issue can be constructed as a security issue across different historical, cultural and political contexts. This framework will be refined and adopted in this dissertation to examine the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics in the case of the PRC. This chapter provides the theoretical specification of the Copenhagen School’s approach and the next chapter combines it with the Paris School’s approach as the combined analytical framework of this dissertation.

The Copenhagen school has captured survival as the crucial criterion for anything being constructed as a security issue. Buzan and his colleagues say ‘security is closely

linked to survival that everything threatens the existence of a referent object can be potentially declared as a security issue' (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.21). Huysmans has similar views: he interprets security as a life strategy which mediates a relation to death (Huysmans 1998a). The criterion allows any referent object facing a survival threat to enter security agendas, regardless of its traditional or non-traditional nature. Survival acting as a gatekeeper ensures all security issues are related to the existential threat of a particular referent object. Based on the criterion, the school distinguished 5 different security sectors which are the military, environmental, economic, social and political sectors.

McDonald quotes Wæver to explain that 'this is less a normative choice for the Copenhagen School – a belief in where the study of security *should* be focused – than an analytical one based on the commitment to the idea that “at the heart of the (security) concept we still find something to do with defence and the state”’ (McDonald 2012, p.74; Wæver 1995, p.47). Rather than making a universal list of security issues, the school uses survival as the key to bridge traditional and NTS threats and comprehends the composition of security agendas as coherent under this notion. Anything that threatens the existence of a referent object can be potentially constructed as a security issue through a successful securitisation. Wæver believes security should be flexible for various extensions under different security actors in a specific form of politics (Wæver 1998, p.79), in which the securitisation framework offers an alternative way to define what is a security issue under the constructivist lens and connects traditional and non-traditional security.

The school has categorised issues into non-politicised, politicised and securitised and this categorisation outlines the process of securitisation. A non-politicised issue is something that is not included in the public discussion and therefore the state is not using its capacity for dealing with it (Buzan *et al.* 1998, pp.23–24). An issue which is politicised is one which is included as a part of public policy and the government is using public resources to handle it. When politicised issues are not being well managed or something accidentally goes wrong, securitising actors can declare that something, i.e. a referent object, is existentially threatened (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.36). An extreme version of politicising is one that aims to deal with life-and-death situations. A successful

securitisation requires (1) a declaration of existential threat, (2) the acceptance of the relevant audiences and (3) the rights granted by the public to the securitising actors to break the normal political procedures and carry out emergency measures to deal with the threat (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.25). The framework outlines the life cycle of an issue throughout securitisation, from non-politicised, politicised, securitised and finally to de-securitised. This dissertation examines how population growth in the PRC has been through the process: of politicisation in chapter 4, of securitisation in chapter 5, and lastly of shifting towards securitisation of population decline (but not a de-securitisation) in chapter 6.

Securitisation starts when a securitising actor declares that a referent object is existentially threatened. The school recognises the declaration as a securitising move: the securitising actor is framing a particular politicised issue as a security threat. These actors need to convince relevant audiences to authorise the implementation of extraordinary measures to cope with the threat they have framed. But how can we justify whether the securitisation move is successful or not? The school analyses how language is used in convincing relevant audiences about the existential threat through the application of speech acts. The contemporary use of speech acts goes back to Austin and Searle who said ‘language is a rule of governed intentional behaviour’ and ‘speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises and so on; and more abstractly, acts such as referring and predicting’ (Searle 1969, p.16).

In Austin’s book *How to Do Things with Words*, speech acts have three particular forms which are a locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act (Austin 1975). A locutionary act simply refers saying something, which is the basic linguistic action of voicing a meaningful sequence of words. An illocutionary act is an act done in uttering what one does, for example, by saying ‘I promise’ in suitable circumstances a promise is made. However, this utterance is distinguished from anything affecting this act, i.e. it makes no difference whether you believe my promise or not. A perlocutionary act is the action performed by speech only if certain effects are generated such as persuading, ridiculing or threatening someone.

This linguistic concept was leveraged and transformed to analyse the discursive construction of threat within securitisation (Waever 1995). Waever suggests that the presenting of speech is not only representing a view on a particular issue but also an act of constructing the idea of how people think of the issue, i.e. ‘the utterance itself is the act. By saying it, something is done’ (Waever 1995, p.55). Therefore, the school studies the language used by securitising actors and examines how their securitising moves frame something as a security issue. The school regards this as important because security in their intelligent lens is a self-referential practice, i.e. the issue may not necessarily exist, but the manner of presenting can make it a threat to specific referent object(s) (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.24). The manner of presenting here refers to the speech acts of securitising actors. As the use of speech act is part of the philosophy of language, Balzacq calls it philosophical view of securitisation (Balzacq 2010).

A speech act is recognised as a successful one when the following intrinsic and extrinsic elements are fulfilled. The intrinsic element refers to the security language used to construct a situation where ‘if we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant’, i.e. an existential threat, and provide a possible solution to the specific threat in different sectors (Waever 1996; Buzan *et al.* 1998). The extrinsic element refers to the (officially) authorised role for securitising actors to influence and convince relevant audiences. Therefore, a successful speech act in securitisation includes the use of security language plus the authorised role of securitising actors to persuade others to recognise their speech. Once the audiences are convinced and agree to carry out emergency measures outside the general political realm, securitisation is successful.

A successful securitisation grants the authority to bypass ordinary political procedure and carry out “extraordinary and emergency measures” to tackle the threat in an urgent manner. All these measures adopted aim to settle the securitised issue, removing it from the security agenda and putting it back into normal political practices, i.e. de-securitisation. The school regards security as a negative and a failure to deal with a particular politicised issue within the general political realm (Waever 2004, p.8). De-securitisation is a kind of ‘panic politics’ which takes place after securitisation, acting as a reverse process to give a

fix to a particular securitised issue to return to normal politics (Waever 1995; Waever 2005). This is exactly an opposite view of security compared with the Welsh School, whose Critical Security scholars regarded security positively as it served as an instrument to emancipate individuals from an array of threats.

### *2.8.1 Differences between the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School*

What are the reasons for this research to use the Copenhagen School's approach but not that of the Welsh School? One reason is that the securitisation framework offers a more structured and sophisticated framework to delineate the threat construction processes in various sectors. Another reason is that the Copenhagen School's framework is relatively neutral when it comes to the matter of state. More specifically, the Welsh School has a rather rich class conflict context and a rebel symbolic meaning. They prefer 'politicising security' to securitisation as they argue that the latter can easily be leveraged by statesmen and turned against individuals (Bilgin 2012).

While other scholars have also pointed out that the role of the state in securitisation always overrides other securitising actors (McSweeney 1996; Huysmans 1998b; Eriksson 1999), it is argued that theoretically anyone can construct anything as a security threat within the framework. Statesmen, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, individuals can have the same opportunity to declare both traditional and non-traditional threats with their securitising moves, even though it is hard for every securitising move to fulfil the three conditions for a successful securitisation. The reason for most securitisation analysis regarding the state as a major securitising actor is because it usually has greater capabilities to conduct a successful securitisation. Rather than using Critical Theory, which presumes the state to be a (potential) enemy, securitisation, as a neutral framework, can more objectively examine the importance of the state within the construction of threat, i.e. securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC in this research. The framework is merely designed for examining the process of threat construction and 'not dogmatically state-centric in its premises, but often somewhat state-centric in its findings' (Buzan and Waever 2003, p.71). Floyd gave a further explanation that 'the

majority of securitisations and de-securitisations take place in the state-centric domain this is not because of the personal preferences of Buzan and Waever, but rather refers to what is going on in practice' (Floyd 2007, p.41).

Regarding the differences between the Welsh School and the Copenhagen School, Critical Security scholars also found securitisation ethico-politically problematic. They are judging whether the framework encompasses 'traditional, zero-sum, militarised forms of thought and action?' (Wyn-Jones 1999, p.109). To be more specific, they raise the question that while state elites are commonly the dominant actors, would they transcend individuals' interests for traditional security purposes? The Welsh School has a strong Marxist sense that is alert to the class conflict between traditional security (state) and NTS (individuals). It is generally afraid that individuals' security issues are being ignored due to vested interests and the political propaganda of state elites. Fierke looked at previous experience and concluded that 'change had to begin outside the establishment, within civil society, thereby changing the interest of elites in bringing about new politics' and therefore 'politicising security' is a good way to change the world (Fierke 2007, p.63).

The great divergence between the two schools is mainly because they are serving a different purpose regarding security. The goal for the Welsh School is politicising security and using it as an instrument to emancipate individuals, i.e. 'the point is to change it' (Marx 1888). However, the main reason for the Copenhagen School formulating the securitisation framework is to study the mechanism of constructing a threat. It is simply designed as an analytical tool which enables constructivists to capture and understand particular social, cultural and language contexts which contribute to the securitising of threats. Therefore, we can see that the framework is not mainly focused on analysing political reasons or class struggle behind securitisation as it is not inherently designed for that purpose. The Copenhagen School has made a simple assumption, that security is all about survival (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.21), and formulated a neutral framework to study what security is and how an issue is made a threat.



### *2.8.2 Criticisms of Securitisation*

This research has adopted this framework to examine the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics through the path of securitisation in the PRC. Although it was a successful securitisation that granted the authority to carry out emergency measures, namely the one-child policy, de-securitisation has not yet taken place regarding the twin issues of security and population in the country. Instead, there is a shift from securitising population growth to population decline in the latest development. In order to investigate the reasons behind the securitisation of population dynamics, the research applies the lens of post-structuralism. Nonetheless, before getting into the discussion of how post-structuralism can contribute to the research design, there is a need to review the criticisms of the framework of the Copenhagen School as this research is adopting it. Recognising the weaknesses of securitisation, provides insights into how to refine the research design and enhance the generalising power of this research.

The Copenhagen School has formulated a securitisation framework which bridges polarised concepts, traditional security and NTS, under the notion of survival. It demonstrates how an issue can be constructed as a security threat in its sophisticated framework, which this research is going to adopt in examining how population dynamics was constructed as a security threat to the people in the PRC. Nevertheless, the securitisation framework is not perfect. There are two main types of criticism of the framework, which are 1) problematic pre-assumptions and 2) deviation of speech acts. The following section will go through these criticisms and the replies of the school with different examples to evaluate the credibility of the securitisation framework.

#### *2.8.2.1 Criticisms of Euro-American presumptions*

Although securitisation moves beyond defining what security is and using survival as the criterion to differentiate security issues among normal politics, some scholars point out that it is “theory-dependent”, and presumes the political system is a democratic one. This pre-assumption is particularly significant because without it the role of non-state securitising actors and the acceptance of relevant audiences would be greatly diminished.

Huysmans regards the development of the securitisation framework as based on ‘specific European security experience and/or questions’ (Huysmans 1998b, p.483). Even though the framework is mainly derived from European security experience, he does not question its applicability and credibility to non-European states such as the USA as he recognises a tendency to shift from empirical research into security agendas (in European states) to conceptual ideas, making the framework more universally applicable.

Tracing the school’s publications, in fact, yields support for Huysmans’s view. It is noted that the detail of the securitisation framework cited in this section is mainly from the book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Buzan *et al.* 1998). It is a more conceptual and universally applicable framework that does not attach to European security experience alone. Curley and Wong regard it as a milestone which represents ‘the most fully development of the framework’ (Curley and Wong 2008, p.5). Later publications like *Regions and Powers* (Buzan and Waever 2003) introduced the concept of regional security complexes that illustrates the importance of regional security analysis and how transnational security issues bind countries together in a regional formation and *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (Buzan and Hansen 2011) also reveals that the school is moving towards a more conceptual and universal framework.

Nonetheless, what Huysmans regarded as problematic is that the framework is based on Euro-American culture and understanding of international relations and security (Huysmans 1998b). This is a fundamental problem that reduces the explanatory power of securitisation, and it cannot be solved by simply moving the framework towards a conceptual one. There is a pre-assumption that the political system is always a democratic one. In its rhetorical structure, it presumes that people have freedom of speech to declare something or someone to be existentially threatened. It also presumes that relevant audiences can discuss and even participate in voting whether they are convinced of the need to use emergency measures to solve a securitised issue (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.25) (although the acceptance of relevant audiences can also be granted on consent rather than coercion). Moreover, only a democratic system has general political procedures for securitising actors to carry out emergency measures to deal with the security issues. Does

securitisation only apply to the democratic world, and not to non-democratic regimes such as the PRC?

In a non-democratic system, there is rarely room for general discussion of political issues. The decision-making process in this system mostly relies on the leader or dictator of the country. If we try to apply securitisation in these cases, the political leader is the main securitising actor (if it is not the only actor). However, he/she does not necessarily gain any acceptance from the audiences for 'emergency actions' to deal with what he/she declares as a security issue. Actually, the existence of 'emergency actions' is also doubted as there is no such thing as a 'general political procedure' in these kinds of systems, especially in a dictatorship.

This also raises the question of the heavily weighted role of the government, or the dictator himself/herself, which overrides other voices in a non-democratic country. As discussed, although scholars have regarded the framework as state-centric, which in a certain sense contradicts the multi-sector approach, the democratic system of audiences' acceptance can act as a counter balance, preventing the dominance of a single securitising actor. Some even put the framework under a realist perspective of widening security (Hough 2008), to which the school replies that 'just as our approach is either state-centric or not, it is not in its set-up widening or not. We try conceptually and definitionally to be open, to create a formal concept, and to let the world be state-centric or not, be widening or not' (Waever 1999, p.335).

As stated before, securitisation is a neutral analytical instrument to study threat construction based on the criterion of survival. There are numerous applications of securitisation of NTS in the Asia Pacific region, like drug trafficking in Thailand, maritime terrorism in Singapore, people smuggling in Australia and unregulated migration in Asia (Emmers 2003; Emmers 2004; Curley and Wong 2008). In these cases, we can find that although most speech acts analysed are those of government representatives, the democratic system (although not every of them is a democratic country) acts as a counter-balance to prevent the dominance of government as the single actor. Unfortunately, the

balance is ruined due to the absence of this countermeasure in non-democratic countries.

Can securitisation be applied in non-democratic countries then? In fact, the applicability of securitisation in non-democratic states has been examined by various scholars. For example, Vuori pointed out that with the illocutionary logic of securitisation, an elaboration of speech acts in a linguistic and philosophical view can help to make the framework capable of explaining securitisation in non-democratic systems (Vuori 2008). By identifying the ‘rules’ in these societies to replace traditional “democratic political procedures”, the securitisation can be applied in a logical way.

In non-democratic societies like the PRC, antagonistic contradictions within the countries are treated as “normal politics”. Vuori uses the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 in China as an example to illustrate the application of securitisation in non-democratic countries. Although daily antagonistic contradictions are common in non-democratic countries, in order to keep these non-democratic governments in power, use of coercion alone is not a wise choice. In extreme cases like the Tiananmen Square massacre, the government authority must legitimise their use of extraordinary measures (Holm 2003, p.219), in this case the military suppression of the student protest. The CCP government found that they had to use persuasive speech to convince their citizens that the suppression was necessary or else the legitimacy of the government would have been greatly damaged. This is regarded as an emergency measure in a non-democratic country under the securitisation framework. The tolerance of the suppression can be treated as the “acceptance of the audience” as they allowed it to happen in order to sustain the survival of the government. With this additional elaboration of the framework, we can see that although the role of other securitising actors may not be as important in non-democratic states, securitisation is still credible to explain the security issue by analysing the speech acts of government representatives.

#### *2.8.2.2 Criticisms of Speech Act*

Another main criticism of securitisation is the deviation of measurement, which refers

to the diminishing power of speech acts in today's image-oriented world. Williams has questioned the explanatory power of securitisation, which is closely tied to speech acts when the world is seeing a growing importance of images and televisual communication (Williams 2003). He explores how securitisation may be affected by events like September 11, which was reported visually by television news, and stresses that the shift of medium of communicative action (Deibert 1997) will affect the credibility of securitisation.

By using his example of September 11, he claims that the view of the visual media is not neutral, e.g. CNN effect (Robinson 2002), and repeated airing of the images and videos may (falsely) affect the public view of the event. Responding to this criticism, the school recognises the hypermedia as a functional actor, i.e. an actor who affects the dynamic of the sectors (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.36) but not acting a securitising actor declaring something is in danger. The framework focuses on analysing the speech acts of George W. Bush, the US President who declared the war. Bush is the one who declared the existential threat of terrorism, demanded acceptance/tolerance of the citizens for the war (emergency actions outside normal politics) and he is the one who was granted the authority to tackle this problem. Therefore Bush, rather than the hypermedia, was the securitising actor when securitisation is looked at by speech act.

Taking the territorial dispute over the Senkaku (Japanese name) / Diaoyu (Chinese name) Islands between Japan and the PRC as another example: there was a collision between a Chinese fishing vessel and a Japanese Maritime officer's ship in winter 2010. There were different versions of videos posted by television news on the internet, trying to find out which party initiated it and should be held responsible. However, the securitising actors are the government representatives of both countries that claimed their sovereignty was being threatened in "their own territory". This is another example to show that the media are rarely (although it's not impossible) securitising actors but instead, are normally functional actors even in today's visualised world. The convincing speech acts by securitising actors are still the core element within the securitisation process.

### *2.8.2.3 Other Criticisms of Securitisation*

Having discussed two main criticisms of securitisation and how they can be addressed, we turn to further criticisms that cannot be resolved within the framework itself. There is no doubt that securitisation is a useful analytical tool for understanding the changing security relations among communal groups (Krause and Williams 1996, p.244), yet McDonald suggests that its ‘logic of security – associated with secrecy, urgency and ‘panic politics’, are ‘relatively fixed and inevitable’, making it quite ‘unconstructivist’. More importantly, these fixed elements under the logic of security, such as emergency measures and de-securitisation, are vague in their definitions. There is a lack of literature discussing how to distinguish emergency measures from normal political procedures. One can always clearly recognise extraordinary actions such as the war on terror and the one-child policy as an emergency measure. Nonetheless, when it comes to NTS issues like global warming, it is actually difficult to establish what exactly the extraordinary measures are – can reducing greenhouse gas emissions counted as one? Moreover, if these measures are sustained in the long-term and continuously included in regular security agendas, can we still regard them as ‘emergency measures’? This also raises a series of questions about de-securitisation, such as how can we certify whether the NTS problem is being de-securitised? In order to confront all these weaknesses, this research introduces a post-structural perspective, namely the Paris School, in the analysis of security and population dynamics to provide what securitisation lacks.

### *2.9 Post-structuralism and the Paris School*

The Welsh, Copenhagen and Paris Schools are categorised under the umbrella of International Political Sociology (IPS) of security, which has formulated different approaches based on European security experience (Bigo 2012). Above, we have discussed the differences between the Welsh and Copenhagen Schools in constructing security, i.e. the former prefers politicising security while the latter prefers securitising it. The Paris school emerged as a post-structuralist approach, which developed a distinct and sophisticated theoretical security analysis. It is defined by its rejection of “modernity”;

‘post-modernism’ is often used as an interchangeable term for one of the analytical approaches to security. The post-structural security agenda contains a large variety of issues and emphasises the relationship between security and language, i.e. linguistic turn. Post-structuralists argue that positivist approaches, e.g. realism, are not able to recognise the pre-existing meaning of security; instead, positivists create boundaries and hierarchies which allow some security agencies (state and government officials) to silence others (NGOs and individuals). Post-structuralism aims to ‘avoid false universalisations of specific culture and to analyse the symbolic gains generated by a specific group’s own interest in universalism’ (Bigo 2011, p.233).

In order to draw out all these hidden assumptions and listen to the voices of minorities, post-structuralists, on the one hand, use critical techniques, for example drawing on Derrida’s work to uncover the political reasons behind giving the state a significant role in tackling security issues (Derrida 1992). On the other hand, they focus on the deconstruction of texts to demonstrate every cultural construction of security, which avoids domination of security framing by some agencies. By examining the security interpretations of various security agencies, the approach provides a method to review and rethink the consequences of our modern thoughts and practices. However, unlike the Copenhagen School, which emphasises discursive speech acts, post-structuralists pay more attention to the actual practice of security and everyday politics. They believe that constructivism only exists in the empirical examination of (security) practices and therefore adopt (ethnographic) methods to understand both the construction and the struggles of priority of particular (security) practices (Bigo 2011; Aradau and Huysmans 2014, pp.608, 613). It is insufficient to merely analyse security claims and discourses of particular security actors as these are only interpretations (or interpretations of interpretations of reality). On the contrary, they choose to adopt a relational and practical approach examining the actual practices of various security agencies in the field, which provide multi-dimensional insights into the politics of security. Balzacq calls it sociological view of securitisation which examines the actually security practices, social and cultural context and power relations throughout the securitisation (Balzacq 2010). It broadens the view of securitisation from merely studying speech act to a practical approach that provides a multidimensional understanding of the

threat construction process.

As a post-structural approach to security, the Paris school agrees that insecurity is politically and socially constructed. Its work is inspired by sociologists such as Bourdieu and Foucault. Pouliot and Mérand regard it as a combination of ‘Bourdieu’s field’ and ‘Foucauldian discourse’ (Pouliot and Merand 2013). Bigo, as one of the figureheads of the Paris School, has admitted that his work originated from Foucault, but later leant towards Bourdieu’s work which emphasises the study of practices with a relational approach (Bigo 2013, p.127). The school commits to ‘moving from a threat-focused analysis to an interpretation of insecurity as a domain of practice that is produced and reproduced through socially and politically investing security rationality in policy areas’ (Huysmans 2006, p.6). It points out that security studies is not only about how to recognise a threat and deal with it effectively but should also examine the politics of insecurity and evaluate to what extent security politics responds according to actual insecurity faced by various people in society (Huysmans 2004). Bigo demonstrates a way to investigate the politics of insecurity by merging internal and external security as agencies (Bigo 2000).

The Paris School contributes to bringing insecurities into a broader analysis by looking at the institutional security routine and competitions between agencies. The school also attempts to highlight the competitions between institutional agencies as a significant part of the security framing technique of government in ‘doing security’ (Huysmans 2006). In order to understand the logic of the security practices carried out by the agents, it is necessary to trace the historical trajectories and identify how particular practices can achieve the agent’s objectives at the lowest cost (both monetary and relationally) (Bourdieu 1990: 50). As Bigo put it, ‘norms neither follow rational interests nor emerge from shared beliefs and attitudes and are even less the result of their dialectical relations. They are the product of the strength of the historical trajectories of an immanent set of actions incorporated into ethos and habitus, which makes sense in regard to specific social universes’ (Bigo 2013, pp.124–125).



Balzacq also agrees that ‘securitisation is a historical process that occurs between antecedent influential set of events and their impact on interactions’ (Balzacq 2010, p.14). The Paris School’s practical and relational approach studies the political and cultural context where the securitisation takes place, enabling us to understand what security means in specific case studies. Another reason for the Paris school moving from a merely discursive approach to a technocratic approach is that they recognised an implicit bias towards politicians (referred to as the state rhetoric) as their speeches are highly accessible compared to those of other agencies. The importance of other agencies is being undervalued, especially the administrative agencies that carry out security practices.

By investigating the administrative security practices, scholars can identify cultural contexts and social relations that might lead to deviation of security practice from the official policy. Moreover, the empirical investigation of the institutional and political routines of ‘doing security’ can increase ethico-political understanding of security, which contributes to identifying the politics of insecurity, and how security framing affects social and political power relations (Huysmans 2006, chapter 8). It contributes to identifying the intentions of particular agencies, i.e. state and officials, in dominating the framing of security. Bigo came up with the concept of security professionals and managers of unease, who are people with a political role, using their trained skills and institutional knowledge to create ‘a continuum of threats and general unease in which many different actors exchange their fears and beliefs in the process of making a risky and dangerous society’ and gain power and legitimacy by tackling the fear and the ‘problems’ they have created (Bigo 2002, p.63). In this sense, it can also be an explanation of why securitisation persists in some cases: there are various professional managers of unease using their professional knowledge to create an endlessly fearful society which relies on government to tackle all these issues. Bigo called this ‘governmentality of unease’. In this way, the approach is, in fact, focusing on the examination and evaluation of the political effects of the case study (Aradau and Huysmans 2014, p.613).

## 2.10 A Combined Framework for Analysis

This research combines both the Copenhagen School and the Paris School's framework in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the case in the PRC, as Balzacq regards the combination of philosophical and sociological insights is useful in examining the process of securitisation (Balzacq 2010, p.3). Regarding the Euro-American presumptions of the Copenhagen School mentioned above (see. Chapter 2.8.2), Acharya has modified the framework to make it more comprehensive and compatible even in an Asian context, in his ISDD-Ford Project on Non-Traditional Security in Asia. His approach has been adopted quite extensively in Asian security projects (for examples, Emmers 2004, Caballero-Anthony *et al.* 2006, Curley & Wong 2008). Caballero-Anthony and his fellow editors listed 4 limitations in his edited book *Non-Traditional Security in Asia: Dilemmas in Securitisation* including 1) the missing ring of why securitisation takes place, 2) the neglected empirical security practices, 3) its Euro-centric-ness and 4) the lack of evaluation of its emergency measures and the progress of de-securitisation. According to the ISDD-Ford project, they have formulated a modified model with 7 steps to analysis Asian cases (see below). This chapter will follow this model and investigate the securitisation in chapter 5 and 6.

- 1) Issue area
- 2) Securitising actors
- 3) Security concept
- 4) Process
- 5) Outcome I – degree of securitisation
- 6) Outcome II – Impact on the threat
- 7) Conditions affecting securitisation, including the interplay of different concepts of security, linkages between security issues, role of powerful actors, domestic political systems and international norms

(Caballero-Anthony *et al.* 2006, pp.5–6)

This dissertation adopts securitisation framework to analysis the threat construction of population dynamics in the PRC since 1979. Beyond that, the thesis also examines the politics of the securitisation in order to explain the persistent framing of population dynamics and its long history as an ‘emergency’ measure, i.e. the one-child policy. In addition, if this particular emergency measure has persisted for over 30 years; can it still be recognised as an emergency measure outside the general political realm?

The application of the Paris approach can act as a complement to explore the political reasons for this persistence. What are the struggles and rivalries between institutional agencies and administrative agencies within the securitisation? Are there knowledge and technological resource differences between them that formulate a hierarchy in the politics of insecurity? Studying all these questions not only sheds light on the politics of insecurity of population dynamics but also provides insights into how people’s everyday lives are being affected by the politics of (in)security. The following will further elaborate the security techniques of the securitisation of the population dynamics and the politics of insecurity.

	Approaches	Analysis	Aim to answer the question of
Copenhagen School	Securitisation, Speech acts	Discourse (philosophical)	How to make an issue a security threat?
Paris School	Struggles of priority, Governmentality of unease	Practices (sociological)	Why make an issue a security threat? What are the political effects of the securitisation?

Table 1: The Copenhagen School and the Paris School

While examining the actual practices of the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC, it is known that there are various strict and harsh practices to enforce the one-child policy. The State Family Planning Bureau and local Family Planning Committees have used numerous ways, including massive social pressure, monetary fines and *forced sterilisation and abortion*, to prevent the Chinese having more than one child. All these coercive enforcing measures are far stricter than necessary as these measures create an array of socio-economic problems such as violation of human rights, unequal enforcement between the rich and the poor, child trafficking, imbalanced sex ratio, and gender inequality.

Studies have also shown that new Chinese generations growing up without siblings have relatively poor communication and interpersonal skills, leading to mating problems when entering their reproductive years (Kane and Choi 1999; Zhai and Gao 2010). As a result, the future fertility rate of the PRC will continuously decrease and it is foreseeable that the PRC's potential workforce will also be declining steeply, leading to demographic-related problems like a high dependency ratio and huge healthcare expenditure.

The enforcement of the one-child policy is far too strict and lacks humanity, going beyond the purpose of population planning. Despite all the socio-economic problems arose, the CCP government finally ended the policy in October 2015, yet this does not mean that there will be no more population control in the authoritarian state. The securitisation simply shifts from securitising population growth to population decline, and it is possible that there will be a second-child policy coming in the future. This move also reveals the nature of inevitability that population dynamics will never go away and should be taken into account in security agendas as long as humankind endures. Invasive population control as an emergency measure of population dynamics not only shapes the fear of population dynamics but also shapes the fear of the government and its agents. The securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC manufactured fear and spread it across the country, creating a continuum of unease about both the population policy and the officials carrying it out. In this sense, the CCP government is needed in the 'risky and dangerous society' to contain this fear with the one-child policy.

Investigating the politics of (in)security in the case of the PRC provides insights into how security professionals manage the unease of population dynamics to maintain their political position. The management of unease is fuelled by the fear of government officials losing their symbolic control over territorial boundaries after the end of the Cold War and the rise of globalisation (Anderson 1997), which also matches the findings of the New War thesis. It is the same logic as Bigo suggested in the securitisation of migration (Bigo 2002), i.e. population dynamics is constructed as a catchword, representing arrays of fear, in particular security norms, and legitimising the accumulation of power for acting as a protection provider. In that sense, "security" could be regarded as "positive" due to its

effectiveness as a professional technique of governmentality of unease according to the Paris School's perspective. This contrasts with the Copenhagen School's view that regards security as a negative result that should be dealt with in an emergency manner. Yet Aradau and Huysmans argue that

[...] understanding methods as connecting and assembling of ontology, epistemology, concept development, techniques of data gathering and worlds – rather than simply being the expression of ontological and epistemological choices – is an important step... Philosophical coherence between the various elements is less important than a tentative and explorative assembling of ontological and epistemological perspectives as well as data and concept fragments in relation to a research question or set of issues that drive the development of knowledge (Aradau and Huysmans 2014, p.606).

This thesis is aware of the ontological and epistemological differences between the Copenhagen School and the Paris School views of security. However, it argues that it is most important here to reveal how different actors interpret their contextual ideas on security in the case of the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC through analysis of their discursive and practical security practices. This contextual knowledge allows us to understand the distinctive logic sponsoring their actions, and to explore how this understanding could enable us to change the power relation in the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC.

In a non-democratic country such as the PRC, it is interesting to examine the politics of insecurity over population dynamics and identify how different agencies use their professional knowledge to gain power and compete within the governmentality of unease. It would also be interesting to look at whether the actors and audiences recognised or even became involved in the power struggle in the securitisation. If so, are they participating because of their inferior stance in this power politics? If not, will this research shed light on the resistance to the securitisation, provided that a lot of socioeconomic problems arose

from the emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy. In the case of securitisation of migration, Bigo suggested that if politicians, journalists, scholars, and NGOs are more aware of the politics of (in)security, it is possible that they would change their minds and start to resist the securitisation (Bigo 2002). The case of the PRC not only demonstrates the techniques of securitising population dynamics but also reveals the politics of (in)security, which enables us to make a real political impact on how to change it through the understanding of their logic of distinction.

After examining the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC, the case study will further reveal the negative effects of its emergency measure, the one-child policy. It is hoped that reviewing all these negative effects and the politics of insecurity can provide us insights on what would constitute a shift from the securitisation of population growth to the securitisation of population decline. Furthermore, the application of the Paris approach, investigating security practices in a relational perspective, can also provide us with an alternative way to understand the additional context of the prolonged securitisation. The research thus benefit from both the philosophical and sociological approach of securitisation. Colebatch and Larmour suggested that in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of a social issue, one should consider various actors across public, private and the third sector (Colebatch and Larmour 1994), for which the Paris approach complements the Copenhagen School's securitisation framework in this research to look at all security actors together.

Having traced the evolution of security theories over time, this thesis will lay out how population dynamics is regarded as a material cause leading to both traditional and non-traditional security threats in the next chapter. It outlines how traditional security analyses of population dynamics in relation to violent conflicts opt for a causal relationship of the twin issues, while critical studies are more focused on solving the demographic-related problems. The next chapter summarises these rationalist material approaches on security and population dynamics and suggests the research should move beyond and examine the ideational relationship of the twin issues using the refined securitisation framework.

## **Chapter 3 - Security and Population:**

### **Towards a new framework of Population-Security nexus**

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The previous chapter outlined the changing ideas of security correlating with prominent international events. It demonstrated that population dynamics to different extents is regarded as a relevant factor in various mainstream security theories, from traditional to critical security, from constructivism to post-structuralism. This chapter further investigates how different theories follow their own rational paths to analyse the impact of population dynamics on security, which formulates our current understanding of the twin issues and affects the ways government and non-state actors deal with demographic-related problems. This chapter reveals that traditionalist approaches mainly opt for a causal relationship between demography and national security while critical approaches are more focused on threat identification and problem-solving for people's well-being.

When we go back to early literature across disciplines, it is discovered that in the 18th century the "population problem" was widely accepted as the threat of under-population. Philosophers like Hume regarded a large population as an indicator of social well-being where 'a country, indeed, whose climate and soil are fitted for vines, will naturally be more populous than one, which produces only corn, and that more populous than one, which is only fitted for pasturage. But if everything else is equal, it seems natural to expect, that wherever there are most happiness and virtue and wisest institutions, there will also be most people' (Hume 1976). As an economist, Adam Smith comes to the conclusion that population growth is a prominent factor for accumulating wealth of nations: 'if this demand (of labour) is continually increasing, the reward of labour must necessarily encourage in such a manner the marriage and multiplication of labourers, as may enable them to supply that continually increasing demand by a continually increasing population' (Smith 1976).

As discussed in chapter 2, the development of state-centric traditional security studies was influenced by the prevailing ideologies and beliefs. The old conviction that population

was a boon was also deeply rooted in classical realism; for example, Morgenthau suggests population growth has favourable effects on national security in terms of both economic development and military building (Morgenthau 1948, pp.91–94). As well as positive motivations promoting the idea of having a huge population, there was also literature heightening anxiety over population decline, which served as a negative motivation to maintain population growth rates. Teitelbaum and Winter's book *The Fear of Population Decline* gives a summary of the discussions about how a decrease in population can lead to a declining nation (Teitelbaum and Winter 1985). The conventional correlation between demography and security was constructed upon the fear that 'without people, there would be no power and no politics' (Sprout and Sprout 1945, p.29), driving rational states to pursuit larger population to maintain their position in the international arena.

Despite the fact that the anxiety over population decline was built up extensively across disciplines, Malthus came up with an entirely opposite theory of population which he expounded in *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (Malthus 1796). As a mathematics graduate from Cambridge, he used mathematical illustration to demonstrate that population growth would outrun increasing food production and lead to starvation and poverty. This epistemological problem of population growth did not convince many people, as Malthus was being criticised and discredited for failing to foresee the great leap in food production brought about by advanced technological development. However, even though the human race has enjoyed remarkable progress in agricultural production, with the green revolution and the latest agricultural biotechnology, the dramatic population surge in many LDCs in the post-war period made people worry that the picture painted by Malthus might actually come true. Demographers recognised the alarming population growth rate and began to analyse this new demographic trend which, became a burning issue in the field of security studies.

Security studies inevitably rode on the very first wave of anxiety, analysing the material relationship between population and security, i.e. how population explosion could possibly endanger national security. Various realist frameworks were formulated to examine the demographic effects of military conflicts (Choucri 1974; Choucri and North



1972; de Bliokh 1977). This research was carried out in a rather scientific way that took different variables into account, namely natural resources and technological development, formulating equations to calculate the quantitative effects of population growth on military conflicts. Realists opt for a causal relationship to describe the significance of demographic factors to national security. Their views support Malthus's theory that population growth increases the nation's appetite for raw materials like food, water, energy and living space, which creates massive lateral pressure, and without advanced technology to satisfy all these surging needs, there is no other way but to expand the nation beyond its current borders, and this sparks military conflicts.

In addition, demographic growth affects not only the military aspect of national security but also structural and regime aspects (Choucri 2002). It is noticed that population explosion erodes state capacity to protect life-supporting systems for its citizens (structural security), bringing about social instability (Krebs and Levy 2001; Choucri 2002; Sciubba 2011). Surging population accelerates the demand for natural resources, living spaces, and public services, and when the pace of demand goes beyond the government's ability to respond, domestic problems such as environmental degradation, economic recession, famine and inadequate health care provision will arise and lead to significant social instabilities, leaving state legitimacy in a vulnerable position and endangering regime security. Based on the logical structure of these realist analyses, unchecked population growth erodes all three aspects of national security, i.e. military security, regime security and structural security; this outweighs the positive effects on economic and military capacity claimed by classical realists, and makes unchecked population growth a bane rather than a boon.

Rather than opting for a causal relationship by determining the quantitative effects of demography on national security, critical security scholars focus on identifying and solving arrays of demographic-related NTSs. Critical approaches to security such as human security are designed to identify various NTSs and solve them to attain 'freedom from fear and freedom from wants' (UNDP 1994). Human security is a rational instrument to ease the pains brought by demographic-related NTSs across different aspects: food, health,

environmental, economic, personal, community and political security. This chapter has summarised both realists and critical security scholars' rational approaches to the twin issues: the former mainly focuses on determining the causal relationship between demography and national security while the latter is more focused on threat identification and problem-solving for people's well-being. It contributes to the development of security studies by revealing the whole picture of current rationalist methods regarding the twin issues of demography and security.

Enormous effort has been put into traditional security research to establish the material relationship between population growth and national security. For example, Choucri and her colleagues have carried out comprehensive research on Japan, collecting huge quantities of data on its supply and demand of raw materials (ranging from rice to coal, iron and steel), population growth and population density, per capita income, exports and imports, and military expenditure, verifying their theory of national expansion (lateral pressure) on the relationship between national growth, state expansion and interstate conflict (Choucri *et al.* 1992). On the other hand, even though most critical approaches are more focused on solving NTSs than on drawing correlations between demography and NTSs, there is a vast amount of scientific research drawing a scientific causal relationship between population and various NTSs. One example is research on the global trend of emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), indicating that the occurrence and the spread of EIDs are the results of crowding wildlife into ever-smaller areas, [while] human population is increasing' (Jones *et al.* 2008). EIDs are negative outcomes (NTSs) when population growth goes beyond the carrying capacity of nature, and this shows the material relationship between population growth and NTS.

However, apart from making causal connections from scientific disciplines or carrying out its own research on the material understanding of international politics, security studies on demographic aspects can move further and examine the ideas that bridge population and security. Epistemologically, there are great "material/ideational" debates regarding the way that we understand our world, and constructivism provides us with a new perspective to examine the relationship between population and security.

After summarising the rationalist material approaches regarding the twin issues, this chapter attempted to provide another angle to security studies on a demographic aspect of security which focuses on how the ideas of demography are socially constructed and used as levers to carry out securitisation of population dynamics. As discussed in chapter 2, this research adopted a combined analytical framework to examine how these ideas shaped the actions of different security actors and led to the securitisation of population dynamics in the case of the PRC. It is known that there is limited literature investigating the ideas bridging the twin issues. Therefore, this dissertation attempts to fill the epistemological gap by revealing how demography can be used to construct and securitise various security issues including both traditional and non-traditional security threats.

### *3.1 Population Dynamics and National Security*

As Morgenthau states, ‘no country can remain or become a first-rate power which does not belong to the more populous nations of the earth’ (Morgenthau 1948, pp.91–92), revealing the traditional strategic connection between population and national security. The work of drawing demography and traditional security together goes beyond fertility and mortality rate, population density and composition. These realist studies opted for a causal relationship between demographic factors and various socioeconomic problems resulting in violent conflicts which threaten national security. In the classical realist perspective, population is essential for economic development and army building. Nonetheless, these beneficial effects on national security are deemed to be eroded by technological development. Advanced technological applications in primary and secondary production are gradually reducing the demand for manpower, leading to lower labour intensity in various industries, weakening the need for a huge population for rapid economic development. Likewise, the invention of weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear weapons, has also led to a reduced demand for conventional troops (Organski and Organski 1961), thus also weakening the beneficial effect of population on military power.

Derived from Malthus’s principle of population, overpopulation seems to be the root cause of socioeconomic problems and violent conflicts: it is conventional to consider that

an overcrowded state will try to expand and aim for the land and resources of other countries (Chamberlain 1972). However, Sauvy argues that not all populous states are aggressive; whether or not states strive to expand outwards depends on the internal pressure the government is facing (Sauvy 1969). Population dynamics is definitely a prominent factor heightening the internal pressure and Choucri points out that it can be measured by examining how population dynamics interact with technological development and resource availability (Choucri 1974; Choucri 1983). Population is the 'critical variable' as the latter two variables rely on the existence of human beings to be meaningful (Choucri and North 1993, p.232). But two states with similar population size may not be equally expansionist: the technological level and availability of resources would be prominent factors determining the degree of internal pressure, which affects the decision of a state to seek expansion. Analysing all three variables uncovers the level of lateral pressure of a state, i.e. to what extent population dynamics causes socioeconomic pressures pushing states to expand and resulting in military conflicts. The influences of population dynamics on national security have presented a sophisticated puzzle for security scholars. Malthus's theory provided a demographic dimension of security for scholars to reconsider the relationship between security and population dynamics, as he suggested that unchecked population growth can cause various problems such as famine and poverty which can eventually endanger national security.

### *3.1.1 Demography, Technology, Resources and Violent Conflicts*

Advanced technology enables us to provide enough goods and services to satisfy the surging demand of our skyrocketing population, easing the internal pressures that drive states to expand. Mainstream critics to Malthus have always brought out this point that our future innovations can help us through a population explosion and remove its miseries (Tir and Diehl 1998; Homer-Dixon 1991). These critics use Malthus's failure to predict the great leap in food production as an example to argue that technology is always beyond our expectation. However, this example also reveals that speculation on future technological development is utterly unreliable. Even though Malthus's predictions on food production growth were very generous, the influences of modern food production far exceeded his

speculation. More importantly, over-optimistic faith in speculation about new technology ignores the current problems brought about by population dynamics, affecting national security interests in various perspectives. One of the major contributions of Malthus's work is that it facilitates both demographic studies and security studies in addressing the demographic-related problems rather than claiming technology will eventually solve our problems in the long run.

Due to our advanced medical technological development, death rates in LDCs in the post-war period declined sharply. Combined with the high birth rate of the LDCs, this has resulted in population explosions in these countries. The declining death rate is an example of how technology minimises the checks on population growth, e.g. poverty, hunger, disease, and war (Mathlus 1976, chapter 5), leaving population to grow in a geometrical ratio, which outruns subsistence which can only increase in an arithmetical ratio (Mathlus 1976, p.4). Choucri and Bennett suggest that 'if we assume that growth cannot continue forever, we must examine the mechanisms by which added population places under pressures on material and psychological needs and constraints upon further growth' (Choucri and Bennett 1972, pp.178–179). The rapid industrialisation of the post-war period across LDCs, combined with surging populations, unavoidably increased the demand for goods and services, which placed a heavy burden upon their governments and existing resources pool (Weiner 1971). At the same time, advanced technology also increases production of goods and services, so it is difficult to determine whether it is a boon or a bane for the human race.

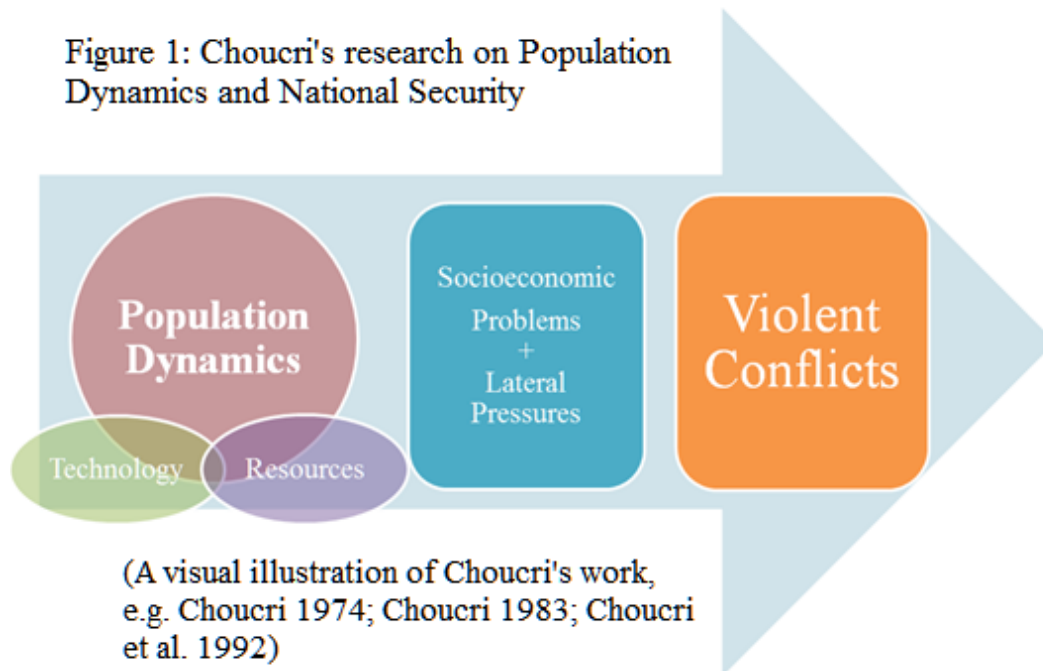
However, one thing which is certain is that technological development keeps altering the social perceptions of "needs". The ever-increasing variety of products has increased the appetites of the human race for their "basic needs", from which there is no turning back. North and Choucri also argue that the cost of research and development (R&D) and applications of the latest technology entail even greater energy consumption (North and Choucri 1971, pp.225–226). Although some would claim that new or renewable energy technologies must be adopted to achieve sustainable development, it remains a reasonable doubt whether the energy saved is greater than the energy consumption of applying the

latest green technology. The critical question should be whether we can satisfy our surging populations' demand and escape from the vices and miseries suggested by Malthus?

This discussion illustrates that whether population dynamics produces security problems is closely related to the level of technology of a country. Choucri and North say that 'the rising demands associated with population growth, combined with commensurate technological development, tend to generate "lateral pressure": i.e., a disposition to expand activities and interests outward — beyond national borders — in terms of imports, exports (including new markets) and strategic security' (Choucri and North 1993, p.234). When a country cannot fulfil the surging needs of its people and suffers from problems like famine and poverty, these internal demographic-related problems can erode the legitimacy of the government and become internal instabilities that threaten regime security. Therefore a state will seek to expand to acquire new resources, and yet this might cause interstate conflicts that threaten its military security (de Bliokh 1977).

In order to identify the interactions of population, technology and resources and determine the causal connections of how population dynamics affect national security, Choucri and her colleagues have formulated a model to test the relationship between national growth, national expansion and international conflict in different cases (North and Choucri 1971; Choucri *et al.* 1992). These massive quantitative studies of population dynamics and national security that collected statistical data of population growth, resources in terms of energy and minerals (resources), gross domestic product as a measurement of current national knowledge and skills (technology), and measured lateral pressure in the form of historical conflicts and international trade (see figure 1). When the population growth rate moves beyond what its technological development and available resources can support, national capacity is limited, and this pushes the state to expand outwards to solve the internal development problems. It is also noticed that 'population variables do tend to be part of the conflict-generating dynamics in societies which already exhibit high stress and strain' (Choucri 1976, p.10). Demographic factors thus act as a multiplier to both internal and external conflicts. Choucri uses statistical analysis to investigate the population-conflict linkages and reveals that population growth has direct

impacts on both internal violence and external conflicts in the processes of national expansion and competition (North and Choucri 1971, p.164; Choucri 1976; Choucri 1983). There are also other studies using demography to analyse both internal and external conflicts which yielded similar results (Bremer *et al.* 1973).



The concept of lateral pressure corresponds with the imperialistic expansion of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy (Morgenthau 1948, p.92) and the colonial expansions in WWII (North and Choucri 1971), when states were desperate to acquire additional resources and land beyond their homeland. Glaser adds that one of the main reasons that the Japanese dared to challenge the US and its allies in WWII was because there were too many people in Japan with too few resources in terms of land and energy to sustain its development (Glaser 2010, p.223). Most case studies recognise that LDCs suffer from higher lateral pressure with a high population growth rate, lower technology level and limited resources available. Nonetheless, these high lateral pressures have a more peaceful way of being released through the spread of capitalist ideas such as international trade in the modern age. Advanced technology actualised the capitalist ideas by bringing us into the era of globalisation. It boosted global trading of goods and services that provide a non-violent way to acquire resources rather than pursuing military expansion for resources. The lateral

pressure can then be released in a more peaceful manner that reveals technology as an important factor to determine the effect of population pressure on security.

### *3.1.2 Capitalism, Marxism, Environment and Population Dynamics*

Despite the fact that globalisation and international trade have provided another way to fulfil the surging domestic demand and release lateral pressure, military conflicts in the world have not been ended by the spreading of capitalist ideas. Lateral pressure still sparks interstate conflicts due to uneven technological development and uneven distribution of resources. There are still national expansions resulting in heavy lateral pressure as there is a considerable number of LDCs that lack the technology and resources to deal with the surging demand of their populations. Marxism captures the core of these conflicts as international class conflicts.

There is a mismatch in population growth and food production globally. LDCs with large populations have a huge demand for food yet they lack the advanced agricultural technology to fulfil the hunger of their people, while MDCs are capable of producing a huge amount of food, way beyond the needs of their contracting populations. Weiner points out that LDCs can only provide limited social services, and the lowest socio-economic groups are most likely to be left vulnerable to poverty and disease due to uneven distribution of government resources (Weiner 1971). These kinds of inequality then become social instabilities within LDCs, which weakens regime security and may drive internal conflicts as the New War thesis suggests. On the other hand, MDCs have an excess supply of food which causes problems such as “rich-men diseases”.

This material mismatch is obvious yet the inequality is suppressed by international development aid, military assistance or political negotiations (North and Choucri 1971, p.231). There are also extremes cases of this kind of international class conflicts, such as when North Korea attempted to blackmail the US with their nuclear weapons for food supplies and technological aid. Marxism contests the nature of population problems, believing that the surging population can produce enough food for themselves if all the



means of production are not held by the capitalists (Mathlus 1976, p.xxiv). Marxism regards population problems and the interstate conflicts caused by lateral pressures are excuses constructed by capitalists to cover up the inequalities of the capitalist system (Boyarski 1976, p.181).

The Marxist perspective makes us rethink the role of technology in containing the lateral pressure of population dynamics – will population dynamics spark conflicts if technology, as means of production, is evenly distributed to all countries in the world? North and Choucri suggest that ‘dynamics of conflict are invariably embedded within situations of dependency and that these are reinforced when dependencies extend across several issue areas thus possibly institutionalising hostilities rather than diluting them’ (North and Choucri 1971). Moreover, globalisation also facilitates the export of local problems such as spreading pandemics and illegal migration to the rest of the world, as states nowadays have less power to control the flows across their borders. Krebs and Levy have summarised the arguments for globalisation and international trade as the capitalist solution to deal with the problem of resource scarcity and carrying capacity, and thus avoid military conflicts of lateral pressure (Krebs and Levy 2001, p.70). On the other hand, from a rather Marxist perspective, it is suggested that the solution should be international transfers of technology, especially for food production, to LDCs in order to solve demographic-related problems (Choucri and Bennett 1972, p.180). Hauser expresses a similar opinion, saying that MDCs should cooperate with LDCs for the latter’s economic growth in order to avoid military conflicts induced by population pressure (Hauser 1980).

Nevertheless, both Capitalists and Marxists have failed to capture the idea of carrying capacity and environmental degradation in relation to population explosion. Neither international trade nor redistribution of technology can solve the lateral pressures brought by population explosion. Unchecked population growth places enormous pressure on various life-supporting systems, which can cause socio-economic problems (Issues and Brandt 1980). These socio-economic problems are not restricted to miseries such as starvation and poverty, but also include environmental degradation, which leads to a permanent reduction of future resource availability. Oyoo pointed out that the problem of

environmental degradation is worsening in LDCs as they have inadequate knowledge and skills to utilise their resources in a sustainable way while fulfilling the growing demand for basic needs (Oyoo 2010).

It is uncertain to what extent mother nature can support the lives of human beings on the planet. It is, however, certain that humankind needs to be constantly reminded that we might be playing a dangerous game, continually testing the limits. It is equally important to highlight that it is not only the population explosion in LDCs that puts pressure on our environment, but MDCs also have a prominent role in pushing global overproduction that hinders the recovery of our useable resources, resulting in irreversible environmental degradation, e.g. the ozone depletion. The development of security studies has paid very little attention to the demographic influences on national security, especially in respect of resources and the environmental. We rarely draw on demographic data to analyse how population dynamics contributes to environmental degradation which leads to intense competition for resources, not to mention further in-depth discussions such as identifying the optimum population ratio and growth rate for sustainable development.

Globalisation is spreading unsustainable capitalist production practices all over the world, leading to global over-utilisation of resources that may increase future military conflicts over competition for scarce resources. When a nation's resources are depleting rapidly combined with a weak economy, it is more likely for that nation to conduct war to gain access to others' resources, to distract domestic attention and solve its scarcity in resources (Krebs and Levy 2001, p.81). Homer-Dixon refers to this kind of conflict as 'simple scarcity conflicts' (Homer-Dixon 1991). Hartmann argues that population pressures and scarcity can be leveraged to create an external enemy and legitimise military actions to fight for resources (Hartmann 1998). Levy suggests that environmental degradation should be considered as a global threat to international security due to its immense importance to the survival of all humankind (Levy 1995). Nonetheless, our current system is not an ideal or mutually beneficial one. Homer-Dixon states that competition for resources will continue because the dominant actors in the international arena can gain enormous benefits from it (Homer-Dixon 1991; 1995). Environmental

degradation and violent conflicts are negative by-products of the surging population in LDCs to which we should draw the international attention of every country in the world to counter these threats to every human being. Goldstone raises the idea of a 'nested hierarchy' which indicates the numerous interactions of political regimes (re)distributing resources globally to address the problems that arise (Goldstone 2012).

The examination of population dynamics in relation to violent conflicts has provided a new dimension to security studies. The theory of lateral pressure has established causal material connections and brought demographic implications into the field of security. Even though it mainly takes a traditional security perspective, it still encompasses domestic socio-economic problems which affect people's well-being and thus threatens regime and structural aspects of national security. The environmental aspects of carrying capacity and available resources also broaden the horizon to an international level of analysis. These discussions also facilitate the development of population dynamics and NTSs as this theory not only opens the door to how demographic change causes military conflicts but also to NTSs such as socio-economic and environmental threats (North and Choucri 1971, pp.224–225), bringing significant political importance and security implications to addressing demographic-related NTSs.

### *3.2 Population Dynamics and Non-Traditional Security*

When scholars are striving to draw the relationship between population dynamics and national security, it is noticed that skyrocketing population causes numerous socio-economic problems which become the burning fuses of violent conflicts. These demographic-related socio-economic problems have attracted the attention of non-traditional security scholars who try to ease these pains of the human race. In addition, if these socio-economic failures create intense internal pressures and political instability that force states to expand and lead to various interstate conflicts, working out solid solutions to these socio-economic problems would, in turn, contribute to reducing the likelihood of military conflicts.

The vast literature of NTS studies has provided different material political solutions like international cooperation and organisation, empowerment of individuals, and redistribution of wealth. Other than the problem-solving perspective, Kaufmann and Toft have noted that there is an emerging field of Political Demography which uses a demographic lens to analyse how population size, composition, and density influence people's well-being and what are the socio-economic and political reactions and implications (Kaufmann and Toft 2012). The book *Political Demography: How Population Changes Are Reshaping International Security and National Politics* is a collection of causal analyses indicating how demographic factors are leading to greying population, youth bulge, climate change, immigration policies and ethnic and religious conflicts (Goldstone *et al.* 2012).

In terms of people's well-being, it is more than biological needs such as food, water and living space that Malthus worried about. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, there are psychological needs namely safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation (Maslow 1943). The notions of Human Security, i.e. freedom from fear and freedom from wants, are tailor-made to satisfy all the different aspects of needs and secure the well-being of everybody. Although the actual effects of population dynamics on different aspects of human security vary in different countries, it seems that the causal relationship between population dynamics and NTS have been widely adopted off-the-shelf for the development of a population-NTSs nexus. From the demographic profile of a country, it is possible to predict which demographic-related NTSs the country would suffer from. Looking at global demographic data, it is discovered that over 95% of the world's population growth is occurring in LDCs (UN 2011). This huge population of new-borns are competing for limited resources and facing arrays of NTSs such as poverty, food and water shortage, physical violence and infectious disease. The remaining 5% of population growth is occurring in MDCs, where the fertility rate is declining dramatically, and migration plays a great role in constituting its population dynamics. The combination of these demographic factors in the MDCs leads to various NTS challenges such as ethnic conflicts, reducing workforce, an ageing population, inflation, and high medical expenses. Moreover, both MDCs and LDCs are suffering from the negative effects population

dynamics such as over-utilising the world's natural resources, pandemics, global warming and migration. Population dynamics raises various NTS challenges not only at the state level but also at international level, so it is essential for researchers and policy makers to recognise how these demographic-related NTSs are eroding all aspects of our well-being.

The population-security nexus is an ever-growing aspect of security. Howe and Jackson have noticed that a new vocabulary has been created for these demographic-related threats, e.g. youth bulges and greying population (Howe and Jackson 2012, p.33). Multiple linkages between population and NTSs are observed which entail almost every aspect of human security including health, environment, economic, social and food security (see figure 2 below). Leahy and Peoples use population profiles of different countries to indicate the material relationship of population dynamics to various NTSs, for examples LDCs in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia have a large proportion of youth people that lack proper education and sufficient economic opportunities, resulting in a relatively high risk of social conflict (Leahy and Peoples 2008). Sciubba points out that The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is also trying to reveal the complicated linkages between population and NTS in health and environmental aspects (Sciubba 2011, p.162).

This literature has contributed to the epistemological, content-based approach by linking various demographic-related threats to different categories of human security and seeking solutions to ease the pains of human beings. Examples include using population projections to predict upcoming challenges of an ageing population, which cut across economic, health and social security concerns (Lee 2000; Mason *et al.* 2010). There are also studies evaluating how changes in demographic composition can cause ethnic conflicts which endanger community security (Anderson and Silver 1989, p.168; Toft 2012; Nordas 2012). Figure 2 is a visual demonstration of various NTS issues linked to population dynamics, yet most NTS approaches, e.g. human security, only focus on identifying and solving the demographic-related problems at the very end of the branches. They fail to recognise that population dynamics plays a prominent role in all these threats and could be securitised as (the cause of) various demographic threats.

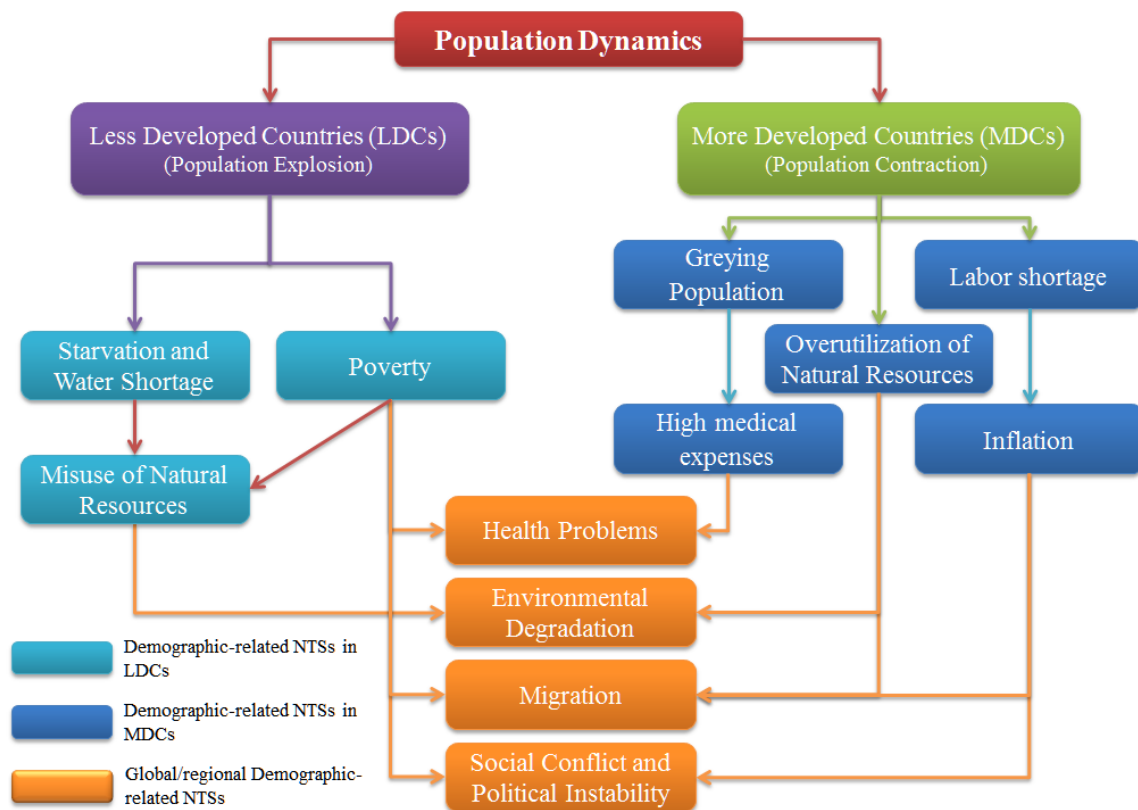


Figure 2: Population Dynamics and NTSSs

In addition, it is important to note that population dynamics can be both the cause and the problem in relation to people's well-being. Sciubba observes that demographic factors have multiple roles that can serve as both initiator and multiplier of various security threats (Sciubba 2011, also see figure 2). Greying population is one of the examples to illustrate this concept. Our latest medical technology has gradually increased the average life expectancy of our kind, yet the problems caused by an ageing population, e.g. a shrinking workforce, would not exist if there were a proportional youth population to maintain a balanced population structure. Therefore, the contracting youth population is, in fact, a threat to economic security as it constraints economic development. Declining fertility gives rise to greying population, along with problems like heavy pension and medical burden, which are NTS threats that most MDCs face that will affect economic, social and health security. It is predicted that their elderly population will be up to 40% by 2050 (Kaufmann and Toft 2012).

Migration is another example to reveal the interactive relationship between population and security. The decision to migrate is an individual rational calculation after considering all the push-pull factors, i.e. people tend to migrate to a better country for their own well-being. The significant difference in well-being between LDCs and MDCs is the main reason for migration, which is an issue for international society to address. When we take a closer look at migration from a state perspective, governments have the authority to regulate movements of people across their borders in order to maintain a balanced population structure for sustainable development, e.g. recently the Canadian government cancelled its immigrant investor program when they found out there was limited economic benefit to the country. Nonetheless, migration might take place beyond state control, resulting in various social problems. For this reason, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) objects to the right of all EU citizens to move to the UK. Unchecked and unexpected immigration can alter the population composition and density of a country, which might trigger ethnic conflicts and social unrest that worsen social security. The social instability aroused can, in turn, lead to another wave of migration to another country and the vicious cycle goes on.

Migration can be a solution for well-being from an individual perspective, but it does not solve the socio-economic or political problems within the state or prevent interstate conflicts (Choucri and Bennett 1972, p.181). In order to deal with all these problems at both national and international level, it is important to notice that the relationship between security and population dynamics is interactive and multi-directional; that population dynamics can be both the cause and multiplier of threats that erode the security of humankind.

In fact, the idea of a multi-directional relationship between demography and security is not new. Choucri has noticed that both surging population and military conflict place a heavy burden on domestic socio-economic systems as both use up a considerable amount of social resources (Choucri 1983, p.31). Goldstone also points out that violent conflict can have a feedback effect which influences population structure significantly (Goldstone 2002). Sherbinin argues that in Haiti, rather than surging population leading to social

instability, it is the lack of social order that encourages people to pursue a large family (de Sherbinin 1996). The relationship between population and security is not simply a one-way causal one but a multidirectional one. This idea takes the population-security nexus beyond looking for solutions to demographic-related problems, seeking to maintain a balanced population structure through a comprehensive population-security policy, as population dynamics itself can be a threat. In Oyoo's case studies on the human insecurity in the Horn of Africa, he suggests that weak governance is one of the root causes leading to a series of NTSs in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia (Oyoo 2010). Therefore it is important for both policy makers and scholars to notice the multiple faces of security and population dynamics in order to tackle these NTSs in a more comprehensive manner.

Even though population dynamics is regarded as a security issue, it is rare for security scholars to address directly the core variables of population dynamics, i.e. crude birth rate (CBR), crude death rate (CDR) and net migration rate (NMR) in security analysis. Demographers calculate the change in population by adding up CBR and CDR, and deducting NMR, and perform population projections based on different predictions of different variables. Even though most demographic-related problems in LDCs are the result of rising birth rates combined with declining death rates, scholars are not likely to suggest coercive birth control as it violates Western ideas of human rights and Catholic values. The situation in MDCs is similar insofar as states cannot adopt coercive population policies to boost fertility rates.

There is less ethical or ideological conflict over migration, which makes it the only core variables of population dynamics that can be directly addressed as a threat in population-security analysis. Both traditional and non-traditional security studies regard migration as a security issue, or as the cause of a series of security issues. Traditionalists mainly focus on the state capacity for controlling the flow of people coming across its borders, especially when globalisation greatly transcends state sovereignty (Hughes 2001). Non-traditional security scholars are concerned about the threats brought by immigrants such as pandemics, economic instability and ethnic and cultural conflicts which threaten people's well-being in various ways (Graham and Poku 2005; Faist 2006).



### *3.3 From Securitising Migration to Population Dynamics*

Nonetheless, it is noted that our understanding of migration and security is beyond the material relationship: there are ideational linkages which connect security and population dynamics. Squire points out that after the 9/11 attack, migration came to be regarded as a national security issue closely tied to terrorist attacks, even though there was no empirical evidence proving a causal relationship between the two (Squire 2015). Squire argues that the idea in people's minds built the correlation, and this collective belief changed government policy and legitimised stricter border controls. The ideational relationship between migration and security has become a burning issue in security studies.

In contrast with the rationalist approach opting for a causal material relationship, constructivist approaches to security are interested in the investigation of the ideas, knowledge, culture and philosophy behind various security issues. Buzan and his colleagues regard security as a self-referential practice such that the issue may not even necessarily exist, but the manner of presenting it can make it a threat (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.24). Thus the ideas of 'threat' are simple 'social facts' constructed by human beings to frame our everyday and political actions. As Wendt notes, these social facts can (re)shape people's identities and alter our security and political behaviour (Wendt 1995). The rationalist approach to a causal relationship only solves the explicit part of the security puzzle, i.e. material actions and reactions.

However, the constructivist approaches study the implicit ideas and beliefs that drive our security actions and policies, enabling us to have a multidimensional view of security. Among constructivist approaches, the Copenhagen School offers a securitisation framework as an analytical tool to examine the process of constructing an issue as a threat, and this tool is widely used to analyse numerous examples of the securitisation of migration. This opens up new ground for security scholars to examine the ideational relationship between migration and security, and how these implicit ideas alter our policy formation in governing migration as a threat.

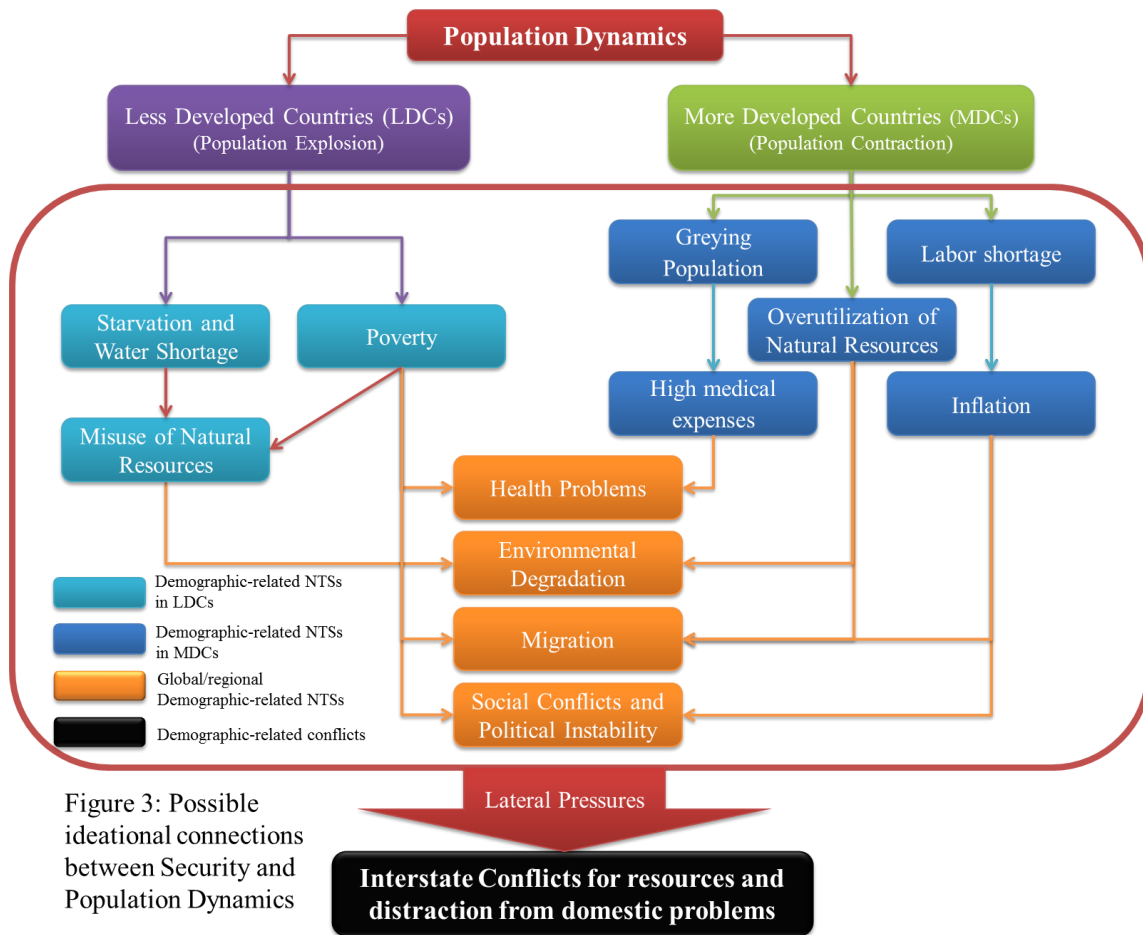
The securitisation of migration examines the underlying ideas, knowledge, and discourse of various security actors and enables us to have a multidimensional understanding of how migration is constructed as a threat (Huysmans and Squire 2010). Linguistic devices such as speech acts are examined to identify the different values including cultural, ethical and political ideas in security discourses. In Bourbeau's studies, he adopts the framework to reveal the cultural contexts of securitisation of migration in Canada and France (Bourbeau 2011). As well as legal population displacements, various scholars also examine how illegal migration has been constructed as a security issue in Asia (e.g. Siddiqui 2006; Curley and Wong 2008). Regarding the impacts of these securitisations, Ibrahim points out that the freedom of people movement has gradually decreased because of securitisation of migration around the world (Ibrahim 2005). Ibrahim argues that the collective idea that immigrants from particular countries could pose security threats to the nation has driven successful securitisation of migration, resulting in the legislation of strict immigration control. He further identifies the discourses that transform immigrants into sources of human insecurity as, in fact, a modern form of racism, threatening the immigrants' social security.

Although the securitisation framework has contributed significantly to revealing the processes of threat construction, it does not yield political implications, and therefore needs further complementation. The Paris School has emerged and studied the politics of insecurity, aiming to uncover the hidden motives behind securitisation. Huysmans pointed out that European integration processes were closely associated with the securitisation of migration (Huysmans 2000). Huysmans and Squire regard securitisation as a political technique to tie security to other political issues, which in the cases of securitisation of migration were leveraged to reinforce state legitimacy in terms of greater control of national borders (Huysmans and Squire 2010). The study of the politics of securitisation provides us with a comprehensive understanding of how securitising actors, especially governments and elites, pursue political goals through their professional security knowledge and techniques, which Bigo called 'governmentality of unease' (Bigo 2002).

It is known that various constructivist approaches to security, such as the Copenhagen School and the Paris School, have recognised the ideational connections between migration and security and numerous research studies have been carried out in this vein. In fact, the constructivist approach is widely adopted in other human security issues such as securitisation of deadly diseases (Herington 2010) and transnational crime (Emmers 2003; Emmers *et al.* 2008). This raises an interesting question: is it possible to extend securitisation to other demographic-related problems and formulate a comprehensive securitisation of population dynamics?

### *3.4 Towards a new framework of Population-Security nexus*

There are various difficulties that hinder us from starting a project of securitisation of population dynamics. First, it is necessary to draw together the connections between security and population dynamics, which determine which demographic-related threats, should be included in the set for securitisation. Regarding this issue, the early section of this chapter summarised the rationalist approaches which established the material correlations between population dynamics and various security threats, i.e. the analysis of the theory of lateral pressure striving to use equations and quantitative assessment to establish a causal relationship between population dynamics and military conflicts, while the analysing of population and non-traditional security tends to confront the demographic-related problems in various security aspects. The material relationship between population dynamics and security associated with diverse moral values, personal and collective identity and cultural backgrounds that formulate our conventional ideas of the twin issues.



Based on this foundation, this section has summed up the material relationship between population and security (both traditional and non-traditional) (see figure 3), which contributes to enhancing our understanding of the conventional ideas towards population dynamics and security. The socio-economic problems brought about by population dynamics was illustrated in the all-encompassing human security categorisation, which is economic, health, food, environmental, personal and community security. Putting the demographic-related NTSs into different categories of human security strengthens the notion that population dynamics can be constructed (as the cause of) various security threats. The ‘views of the international system through a lens that highlights particular aspects of the relationship and interaction [i.e. security and population dynamics] among all of its constituent units’ (Buzan *et al.* 1993, p.31). This constructivist categorisation provides an open approach that can pull all demographic-related threats into an epistemological structure of the securitisation of population dynamics. On this basis, we

can investigate the underlying ideational connections of each demographic-related threat which occurs in a particular case study.

The second difficulty we face in securitising population dynamics is that even though we now have a clear security overview of what demographic-related problems should be included, the large variety of correlated threats has predetermined the massive scale of research, which creates a high barrier to entry. This brings us to the third problem which is the difficulty in finding a representative case that covers most of the common demographic-related problems in the first study of the securitisation of population dynamics. Establishing the new scope of securitisation of population dynamics requires a longitudinal demographic profile of the case study, i.e. a country that faces problems of population growth and population decline, to make a comprehensive analysis of both sides of demographic change and the related threats.

#### *3.4.1 Why study the PRC on Securitisation of Population Dynamics?*

To solve these problems, this dissertation has selected the PRC as a case study for the formulation of securitisation of population dynamics. The research benefits from its longitudinal profile as there are great demographic differences within the country that enable us to investigate the demographic-related problems of both LDC's and MDC's mentioned above. The following will briefly introduce the historical background of the PRC, which will provide a general understanding of why the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) securitised population dynamics. The research further examines how relevant audiences were convinced and legitimised the introduction of the extreme emergency measure, the one-child policy, to deal with it. It reveals that the PRC treated population dynamics in an extremely serious manner, which is different from the rest of the world. In addition, it is also uncommon for the securitisation and its emergency measures to persist for 36 years. The Copenhagen School generally regarded securitisation as a negative outcome that needed to be de-securitised as soon as possible. To investigate the reasons for the persistence of the one-child policy, the research also adopts the Paris School approach in order to examine the politics of securitisation and insecurity, revealing what may have

contributed to the prolonged securitisation of population dynamics and later the securitising of population decline in the PRC.

The PRC, with over 1.3 billion people, is the largest of any country in the world (UN 2006). Generally, average population growth in LDCs is much higher than in MDCs (the top 100 population growth rates are in LDCs). However, the PRC's population growth is abnormally low, falling from 1.07% (which is already a very low rate) in the last decade to 0.47% in this decade (ranking 167th globally, lower than a number of MDCs such as Australia, US, France, and the UK) (UN 2011). The PRC's low population growth rate is accounted for by the introduction of the one-child policy in 1979. Before the 1950s, China was very unstable due to the collapse of imperialism and various civil wars. Its fertility rate was extremely low (below 0.3% annually). When Mao came to power in 1949, he claimed that manpower was the most precious resource, and that there could never be enough Chinese to defend the nation (Kane 1988, p.198; Hesketh and Zhu 1997, p.1685). The country's population was then boosted from 540 million in 1950 to over 850 million by 1970 under his leadership.

However, rapid population growth put heavy pressure on the PRC's limited resources. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) government found it difficult to fulfil the needs of their new-borns. As a result, the government started restricting population growth in 1970s by introducing the Later, Longer, Fewer policy which refers to later marriage, longer intervals between births and fewer children. In fact, the policy was quite successful: the fertility rate diminished dramatically from 5.9% in 1970 to 2.9% in 1979. Nonetheless, the government foresaw that there was still a great hidden population growth as the baby boomers of the 1950-70s were entering their reproductive years. Therefore, in order to prevent socio-economic problems induced by the predicted huge population growth, the one-child policy was launched in 1979.

The one-child policy is a population policy that literally restricts families to having only one child. The strict policy was aimed at alleviating the demographic-related NTSs across social, economic, and environmental perspectives (Pascal 2006). Deng Xiaoping,

the leader of the market reforms in the PRC, regarded kerbing population growth as the key to maintaining a stable society and sustainable economic development (Hesketh and Zhu 1997, p.1685). For decades the CCP government has retained its policy and succeeded in suppressing its population growth to an abnormally low rate. What are the reasons for the PRC carrying out such a strict family planning policy that differs from the rest of the world? Did they have any different security interruption that made the country act so distinctively in the matter of population dynamics? It is worth investigating what demographic-related problems the PRC suffered under the great unregulated population growth, i.e. the baby boom period, which led to the later securitisation of population dynamics in the country.

Although the one-child policy suppressed the PRC's fertility rate successfully, a new demographic crisis was caused by the strict emergency policy. For decades the PRC's population growth was far below replacement level, i.e. a rate of 2.1 children per woman, at which population neither increases nor decreases. The youth sector is sharply declining and the country's demographic profile is in a rapid transition. Leading cities like Beijing and Shanghai now have a population structure which is very similar to those of MDCs. Demographers have predicted that the PRC will encounter new demographic-related problems that usually occur in MDCs, e.g. unbalanced age distribution and a declining (future) workforce. There are other negative effects such as abortion and abandonment of female infants, which are mainly due to the traditional preference for boys. Other lateral social problems like child trafficking, gender inequality in education, and the lack of siblings are affecting the raising of the new generations (Chow and Zhao 1996; Zhai and Gao 2010; Lee 2012). Children under the one-child policy were being overprotected and became "little emperors" in families (Kane and Choi 1999). Children growing up in such an environment are self-centred and have poor interpersonal skills. They face mating problems when entering their reproductive years. As a result, it is predictable that the future fertility rate of the PRC will continue to decrease and it is a critical moment for the CCP government to re-consider its one-child policy, leading to the shifting of securitisation from population growth to decline.

In fact, the CCP government considered relaxing the policy several times (Kahn 1997; Birchard 1998). However, there was rarely a discussion of policy termination. In an announcement of the CCP government in 2011, they finally made public that they were considering lifting the policy after this decade to avoid all of the side-effects (Bohon 2011). Joe Biden, US Vice President, also expressed his worries that the one-child policy was leaving the future working population an extremely heavy burden to take care of a huge greying population (Dwyer 2011). In October 2015, the PRC finally ended its one-child policy, yet this does not mark the end of population control. The securitisation simply shifts from population growth to population decline and the proposed emergency measure, i.e. second-child policy, appears likely to be adopted in the future. Why does the PRC persist in the securitisation of population dynamics? What are the factors leading to such different behaviour compared to the rest of the world? All these questions are worthy of investigation.

In the case of the PRC, this research will first examine the demographic-related NTSs that the PRC had suffered from in the baby boom period. This will help to identify how the ideational relationship between population dynamics and different demographic-related problems was built through the politicisation of the twin issues in chapter 4. Second, the introduction of the one-child policy is reviewed in chapter 5 to provide insights into how securitisation of population growth was carried out successfully in Chinese society. Third, the research examines the politics of securitisation of population dynamics and attempts to find out what led to the persistence of the one-child policy for almost 40 years. Last but not least, in chapter 6 the evaluation of the emergency measure also provides insights into what may have contributed to the shift from securitising population growth to decline.

The research adopts a combined framework of the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. It examines both discursive and practical security techniques adopted in the process of securitisation to review the consistency between security discourses (rhetoric) and actual practices of the emergency measures (practice), a combination of philosophical and sociological approaches to provide multidimensional views of securitisation. The CCP government, as the main securitising actor, declared that the PRC's socio-economic development was threatened by the unregulated population growth. Its State Family



Planning Bureau was creating unease by claiming there were difficulties in allocating resources equally and effectively among the surging population. These security professionals linked different NTSs to population dynamics and convinced the public that ‘if we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant’, i.e. that it was an existential threat. Population dynamics is thus rhetorically constructed as a catchword, representing an array of NTS threats, through which these ideational connections contributed to the successful securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC.

There are several questions worth asking within this securitisation: 1) how did different securitising actors, e.g. local Family Planning Committees and their administrative units use their institutional knowledge to impose the ideational connections between security and population dynamics upon Chinese society? 2) Other than security considerations, were there any political, practical or relational concerns in the creation and circulation of insecurity and unease by securitising actors, i.e. the CCP top officials and the local practitioners? Realising the struggles of priority behind different securitising moves, helps us to recognise what our fear of population dynamics consists of and whether the fear is constructed by other security actors for various political reasons.

The dissertation draws on a wide range of data to examine the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC, including various types of documents such as white papers, governmental instructions and guidelines, local newspapers and records of the speeches of the CCP leaders. The thesis also benefits a lot from the use of anthropological literature (for examples, Greenhalgh 2008; Scharping 2013; White 2006). Greenhalgh’s book *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng’s China* has provided an in-depth explanation of the introduction and implementation of the one child policy by the concepts of policy problematisation, policy assemblage and the micro-politics of science making and policymaking. She has conducted various interviews with local demographers, CCP leaders and frontline practitioners, and emphasises how the CCP problematised population growth to achieve its political interests. Although the concept of problem problematisation seems to be very similar to threat construction process, it focuses on a demographical perspective (policy effectiveness) and an anthropological perspective (the effect of the

policy). This thesis studies it from a security perspective and examines how demography was ideationally constructed as a security issue and legitimised the one-child policy in the PRC.

This chapter has summed up the rationalist approaches of traditional and non-traditional security to population dynamics. While the former strived to draw a material causal relationship between the twin issues, the latter focused on dealing with the very end of the threats related to population dynamics. This dissertation attempts to move beyond a material understanding of the twin issues and examine the ideational relationship using the combined framework of the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. This dissertation argues that population dynamics can be constructed as (the cause of) numerous security threats through successful securitisation. In addition, the study of the politics of insecurity further unfolds the underlying political reasons for the securitisation of population dynamics, which brings in security and political implications in reacting to this purposeful construction of threats.

A deeper understanding of how our ideas of demography shape what we call threats certainly sheds lights on formulating comprehensive security agendas by taking population dynamics into account due to its immense importance to threat construction. Other security actors, such as international organisations, the private sector, and even individuals, can more easily persuade relevant audiences to legitimise the securitisation of the specific demographic-related threats they are facing. As Sciubba put it, population dynamics could be a challenge or an opportunity (Sciubba 2011, p.3). Accumulating knowledge of the ideational connections between security and population dynamics increases the ability of various security actors to confront these challenges with successful securitisations, which contributes to the prevention of numerous demographic-related threats from happening or at least easing the pains of humankind.

## **Chapter 4 – Politicisation of Population Growth in the PRC: Ideological and Ideational transformations**

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The PRC's population is booming.

When the CCP seized power in 1949, China's population was 542 million, far exceeding that of any other country in the world prior to their industrialisation. The US population, for example, was 10 million and Japan had 34 million in their pre-industrialised era (Hu 2012). The population growth of the PRC did not show any sign of slowing down in the early years of CCP rule. In 1953 the first population census of the PRC revealed a considerable surge of 41 million people in 4 years, making the one-party state the largest developing countries in the world with over 600 million people (Xin 2009). If such growth had continued, Ma projected that the PRC would have expanded to become a nation of 2.6 billion people within 50 years and would have suffered from arrays of demographic-related problems such as famine and unemployment (Ma 1979). In his book *New Population Theory* he insisted that birth planning was needed to tackle all these (potential) demographic-related threats. However, as the PRC was empowered by the Marxist ideology to “liberate” the Chinese from the corrupt Kuomintang (KMT) government, Marx's harsh criticism of Malthus's essay on the principle of population rendered the CCP powerless to come up with any population control or even a proper population policy.

Scholars like Ma who raised the idea of population control were under serious pressure as many “patriotic” (if not dogmatic) Chinese labelled these scholars as “rightists” who spread a “bourgeois (or Malthusian) idea of population control” in the Communist state. In the early years of the PRC, the party state took a hard line in embracing Marxism as it was the very ideology which empowered and maintained its legitimacy. Chairman Mao had followed the Marxist line on the population question and encouraged the Chinese to have many offspring. As he put it in his early rule of the PRC: ‘of all things of the world, people are the most precious’ (Kane 1988). Nevertheless, if the CCP stuck closely to Marxist ideology, what are the reasons leading to the implementation of population controls such

as the Later, Longer, Fewer policy in the 1970s and later the one-child policy introduced in 1979?

This chapter examines the process of politicisation of population growth, i.e. using public resources to tackle a particular issue as part of government policy (Buzan *et al.* 1998, pp.23–24), in the early rule of the PRC. As mentioned in chapter 2, issues are categorised as non-politicised, politicised and securitised. The study of the process of politicisation helps to reveal how the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics was established in the early PRC. The process went through the ideological and ideational transformation from Marxism to Maoism, and from large family to small family custom accordingly. This politicisation was particularly successful in altering the Chinese political ideology and attitude to family, which to a certain extent laid the ideological foundation for the later securitisation of population growth, i.e. an extreme form of politicisation for the sake of survival (Buzan *et al.* 1998), which will be discussed in chapter 5.

In fact, the CCP had recognised that an array of demographic-related problems arose while the country's population was soaring. Even though party officials had put faith in Marxist ideology, which rejects the “bourgeoisie's idea of population control” (see chapter 3), they began to realise that adapting Marxism, a Western ideology developed in industrialised countries, off-the-shelf in an Asian agricultural society, i.e. the PRC, would be problematic. Therefore, the CCP forged a path to deal with the contradictions between ideology and reality by interpreting Marxist premises in a flexible way (JEC 1972), and transforming Marxism into Maoism, developing a socialist approach to population growth which matched the historical, political, economic and demographic circumstances in Chinese society.

This ideological transformation can be recognised in the propaganda of the birth control campaign and in public speeches by the Communist leaders. With this mass propaganda, the party took personal reproductive decisions upwards to a collective level of state planning, linking it to various social aspects such as the slowing down of the rise of living standard (Cao 2010). Various ideational connections between demography and

demographic-related problems were drawn by Communist officials, which encompassed food, health, economic, environmental, political and military security. All these demographic-related threats are in line with the analytical framework, i.e. population-security nexus, in chapter 2.

This chapter illustrates how securitising actors created ideational linkages between the twin issues through politicisation, which fostered the carrying out of the later one-child policy through its successful securitisation. On the other hand, it is important to note that the ideational connections drawn in the analytical framework are not restricted to the stated issues. It is an open and flexible approach to which additional demographic-related issues can be added to enrich the framework according to the context of different case studies in which there are securitising actors drawing new ideational connections between the twin issues.

#### *4.1. An Overview of Birth Control Propaganda in the PRC*

In the case of the PRC, the Chinese Communists had carried out a mass propaganda campaign to illustrate how things could go wrong with unplanned fertility in such a huge country. In addition, they suggested family limitation as the solution which favoured the development of the socialist state, so there was a process of politicising population growth. The idea of birth control promoted by the propaganda was contrary to traditional customs and beliefs of the agricultural society, as the number of children was used to calculate the how productive the family was.

The term propaganda can imply falsification of truth. 'Within the correspondence conception, a statement, proposition, or belief is true if and only if there is real, non-linguist facts with which that statement, proposition, or belief accords or fits' (Cunningham 2002, p.112). However, the correspondence concept of truth is not compatible with the Copenhagen School approach which analysis speech act in securitisation. The term propaganda is used in this dissertation merely because it is widely used in Chinese politics

to describe ‘the uses of images and slogans that truncate thought by playing on prejudices and emotions’ (Pratkanis and Turner 1996, p.190).

This chapter argues that the authoritarian government created powerful socialist propaganda to manufacture a revolution in the attitudes to the specific family norm of reproduction. It transformed the Chinese people’s family norms by promoting the advantages of birth control and praising citizens who actually practised it. On the other hand, it stressed the catastrophic consequences to the party state, i.e. the collapse of the socialist society, if people were not responsible in limiting their family size. This led to extraordinary social pressure across various levels to urge people to “do the right thing”. This was a “carrot and stick” approach adopted by the Communist propaganda with the use of strong socialist language and the promotion of political ideology, Maoism, in an Asian non-democratic state.

It is important to point out that the socialist propaganda was interrupted a couple of times, as the CCP was undergoing conflicts between ideology (Marxism) and reality (various demographic-related problems they faced). As the matter of population control inherently contradicts Marxist ideology, the discussions of any birth control measure were treated as “politically incorrect”, leading to various political struggles and instabilities around the issues of population control. For example, Ma Yinchu, former President of Peking University, was condemned as being a Malthusian who spread western “bourgeois” ideas and hindered the development of the socialist state during the Anti-rightist Movement (Liang 2011). He was removed from his position in the prestigious university even though he insisted his ‘new population theory’ was a socialist approach to population dynamics that was appropriate for the Communist party state.

The case of Ma is so significant that contemporary population scholars believed that the condemnation of Ma led to an excess of 300 million births in the 1970s, and there are still numerous Chinese journal articles trying to evaluate whether it was justifiable to condemn Ma. Some claim that the CCP lacked the cognitive ability and political position to accept what Ma suggested (e.g. Huang and Guo 2001; Li and Duan 2010; Qian 2004).

Other examples like the Great Famine during the so-called Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution also disrupted the birth control campaign, revealing the importance of political correctness and the toughness of the political struggle in the Communist state. Li and Duan regarded all these political struggles as inevitable within a non-democratic state like the PRC (Li and Duan 2010), and the rest of this chapter will demonstrate how these political earthquakes, such as the anti-right movement and the Cultural Revolution, disrupted the promotion of family limitation in the PRC, hindering the transformation to new family beliefs and leading to chaotic population growth in the early PRC.

Even though the propaganda of birth control was interrupted by waves of political incidents until the 1970s, these challenges, in fact, accelerated the ideological transformation and facilitated the shift from Marxism to Maoism. For example, the Great Chinese Famine actually revealed the fact that an increase in population was not the most suitable and sustainable way to increase productivity as Marx suggested (Becker 1998), forcing the party to move forward and come up with a socialist approach to legitimate birth planning in the PRC, i.e. the application of Maoism. Such ideas of socialist birth planning with Chinese characteristics still have major influences in the contemporary population policy of the PRC. Regarding the entwined fate of the political upheavals and the transformation of its propaganda, in 1972 the Joint Economic Committee of the United States identified 6 discrete periods of the PRC's population policy (JEC 1972):

- 1) Autumn 1949 – autumn 1954: Population policy against the idea of birth control;
- 2) Autumn 1954 to summer 1957: The party state commenced its very first birth control campaign with mass propaganda to support the idea of family limitation;
- 3) Summer 1958 - early 1962: The “Great Leap Forward” encouraged massive production. The concept of birth control went against the idea of labour-intensive production, thus its propaganda had been dismissed;
- 4) 1962 – summer 1966: Family planning campaign resumed;

- 5) 1966 – 1969: The Cultural Revolution shut down major functions of the entire party state, birth control and propaganda were disrupted;
- 6) Summer 1969 and after: Family planning program resumed and became a major national policy.

Throughout these 6 periods, there was an ideological transformation on the matter of birth control among party officials, and these changing views were promoted to the public through a socialist propaganda campaign, leading to a general ideational transformation of family beliefs among the Chinese through this politicisation. This chapter adopts a historical approach to examine significant political incidents in the early PRC in chronological order and demonstrates how these events intertwined with the birth propaganda. By putting these historical events under the lens of politicisation, it highlights both the ideological and the ideational transformation of demography and security. This chapter divides the processes into 3 distinct stages:

Stage 1) Ideological and cultural incompetence led to ineffective family planning propaganda.

Stage 2) Ideological renovation from Marxism to Maoism due to political turmoil during the Great Chinese Famine and Cultural Revolution, which compelled top Chinese officials to confront the security challenges posed by population explosion.

Stage 3) Ideational transformation of the family belief in Chinese society due to mass birth planning propaganda by the CCP.

These transformations were particularly important for the CCP as they served as a demonstration of to what extent the authoritarian regime could alter and rebuild the values and beliefs, i.e. in the case would be a traditional belief on family size in the PRC. The chapter further argues that this successful politicisation was mainly due to the unique Communist structure and the propaganda put out by various actors across different levels.



This contributes to enriching our understanding of how an Asian non-democratic socialist state practices politicisation and securitisation.

#### *4.1.1 Stage 1 Overview: Ideological and Cultural Incompetence*

The first stage of transformation was a period during which population policy was subject to great ideological contradictions and political conflicts. The overview section briefly demonstrates how historical and cultural circumstances competent compatible with Marxism strengthened the hard-line stance of the CCP to pursue a huge population for the development of the socialist state in its early rule. However, the PRC later faced arrays of demographic-related threats which pulled the party state back to reality, and it reconsidered its population policy. The PRC had revealed a certain degree of awareness of the potential danger of having a soaring population (Tien 1980, p.3), therefore there was some population control being introduced in the 50s and 60s. Yet it is important to note that these birth control practices were not encouraging the Chinese to have small families. On the contrary, they still believed in the benefits of big families, that massive population could contribute the development and prosperity of the socialist state. The introduction of birth control was meant to be a safety measure to prevent the Chinese from overdoing it and keep family size within 3-4 children.

Having such a mild idea of family limitation was mainly because the CCP was still obsessed with the picture of a strong and populous state painted by Marx. To the Chinese Communists, it was a matter of “political correctness” to follow the ideology that legitimised the early rule of the PRC. Communist leaders such as Deputy Shao Li-Tzu insisted there was no Malthusian population problem in the PRC (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.62). They claimed that the reason for carrying out birth control was to protect the health of Chinese mothers and their precious children. As a result, the propaganda work for family planning fell on the Health department’s shoulders until 1964.

Regarding its population policies, the CCP took an entirely different perspective from that guiding western population control, and created positive political motivations for their

citizens by painting birth control as a means to “liberate” women as full producers for building the Communist state (Guo 1997, pp.28–29), unlike Malthus’s thesis using food, economic and sustainability problems induced by surging population growth as negative motivations for population control. Even though the idea of family limitation was nothing as extreme as the one-child policy, the influence of such a propaganda campaign was extremely limited in the rule of the early PRC due to the ideological contradictions between Marxism and birth control, making the politicisation of population growth a very tough job for party officials. Both traditional family beliefs and the economic advantages brought by large family size still dominated Chinese minds. With the ideological contradiction and the clash of traditional values, the progress of birth control was minimal in the first stage.

#### *4.1.2 Stage 2 Overview: From Marxism to Maoism - Ideological Transformation among top CCP officials*

The second stage in fact marked as a turning point in the politicisation of population growth in the early PRC. Blindly adopting a western ideology, i.e. Marxism, in an Asian society like the PRC had given the party state a tough time with a dramatic increase in population and an array of demographic-related problems. These problems had forced the CCP to confront its ideological contradictions, which led to an ideological transformation among top officials in the second stage of our categorisation. Mao made a comment on the Chinese demographic situation and claimed that it would be too late to take action to deal with demographic-related threats if the PRC’s population exceeded 800 million in 1957 (White 1994, p.271).

In order to legitimise the introduction of population control, the CCP forged their socialist approach to the issue of population growth, which marked an ideological transformation in the second stage. Population growth had never been a problem to Marxism as Russia at no time had encountered this issue. The CCP strived to follow the logic of Marxism and, through the process of politicisation, connect birth planning to socialist state planning in order to persuade the Chinese to accept birth restriction. This chapter argues that this was an ideological transformation from Marxism to Maoism on the

matter of population in the early PRC, which was regarded as a socialist approach to demography for the CCP. This chapter identifies the communication itineraries from both top-down central and provincial authorities and bottom-up functionaries and revealed their changing strategies, content, and coverage throughout this transformation.

Through mass socialist propaganda, the Communists tied personal reproductive decisions to collective national interests in order to convince the Chinese that birth planning was for the sake of the entire socialist country. Although family planning was linked to state planning, the early focuses were still the health and well-being of citizens rather than population growth as a source of threats. The politicisation of population growth stood on the ideological ground that human reproduction is just like any other production which requires socialist planning – ‘Socialism plans everything and we need a plan on reproduction. Birth control can bring positive effects to our economic development and prosperity’ (Xin 2009).

Due to the political sensitivity of this issue, non-state press and the general public, who were confused about the differences between the “rightist” Malthusian idea of population control and Mao’s socialist approach to population planning, tended not to follow too closely in order to avoid the risk of sudden political change. However, after several disruptions, the propaganda proceeded in a relatively stable and consistent manner, especially after the endorsement of Chairman Mao in the early 1970s. The propaganda had led to the ideational transformation in Chinese society on family belief. There were some particular cities that were more “well-educated” on the matter of population control than the rest of the country; for example, there was a slogan in family planning propaganda that people should “learn from Dazhai in agriculture”. Dazhai was a city 90% of whose female citizens were free from childbearing and participated in local collective agricultural production as full producers (Tien 1980, p.26). This idea of emancipation was in line with the socialist ideology that if the means of production are not hidden by the capitalists, people have limitless potential in their productivity.

The examination of the ideational changes in Chinese society shed lights on the later securitisation of population growth after the politicisation in the early PRC. In the third stage this politicisation moved beyond the notion of securing the health of women and children and extended its security concerns to economic and long-term state development planning. Such an approach revealed the underlying positive liberty in the CCP's mentality, i.e. to take control individuals' actions to fulfil the collective purpose. The CCP emphasised the presence of control and planning for the collective interest of the socialist state, which eventually led to the introduction of the coercive one-child policy in 1979 as a stepping up of the means of control, i.e. taking the power of reproductive decision making from its people. This was how the CCP started to test to what extent the authoritarian could manufacture a revolution in the ideas of birth through the politicisation of population growth.

#### *4.1.3 Chinese Politics and the manipulation of demographic data*

The dominance of socialist political control also had a great influence on how the Communist leaders regarded the use of science in politicising population growth. Greenhalgh pointed out that social sciences, more specifically, demography, in this case, were considered redundant as the CCP believed Marxism had already painted a full picture of the social world (Greenhalgh 2008, p.55). The undervaluing of "western bourgeois" social science meant there was limited data and research on the demography of the PRC. Studies on demography were forbidden in the early PRC and the vice premier of the party state admitted there was a lack of demographic research when they went through the ideological transformation to legitimise birth planning (Chen 1979a, p.724; Wong 1984, p.231).

On the other hand, even though natural science was regarded as a progressive instrument to raise productivity of the country, it was still very important to maintain political correctness as that was the only way for these results to be taken into account in the CCP's considerations. For example, the first population census in 1953 predicted that there would be a 10 million increase in population per year if the alarming fertility rate

persisted (Ma 1979), yet this warning was ignored by the CCP. However, the party used the same piece of data to project the future prosperity of the “New China” on the basis that it was going to have a massive population. The voices of alarm over the threat of surging population were muted. After the first population census in 1953, Ma repeatedly raised the need to develop scientific research on demography yet he failed to convince top party officials, and he was later removed from his academic position, as mentioned above.

The heavy emphasis on political correctness also led to the submission of false food production data during the Great Leap Forward as the data had to reflect the “speedy development of the socialist state” (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.49). Such political practices led to the unnecessary deaths of millions of innocent people in the Great Chinese Famine. Demographic data were presented in a politically correct manner by the propaganda in order to construct and alter the family values and beliefs in Chinese society, which was regarded as the politicisation of population growth by the CCP.

#### *4.1.4 Stage 3 Overview: Ideational Transformation in Chinese society*

After decades of propaganda, birth control finally tasted its first success with its Later, Longer, Fewer policy in the 1970s (Tien 1980, pp.34–37), which led to an ideational transformation in family norms and reproductive decisions. Under the categorisation of the thesis, this is the third stage, in which the CCP’s propaganda successfully manufactured a fear of population dynamics in Chinese society. Both the propaganda and the birth control campaign utilised the CCP’s resources to handle these demographic-related problems, in a process of politicising population dynamics. Fear of population growth was constructed as the Chinese were ideationally convinced that population growth causes various demographic-related problems. This process of politicisation, and this succeeded in altering the values and beliefs about family planning.

Whether population dynamics was actually a real threat to the Chinese did not matter. As Buzan *et al.* put it, “security” is (thus) a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential

threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat' (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.24). Regarding the case in the PRC, Greenhalgh stressed the importance of "population problematisation" in (re)shaping the Chinese people's thinking about demographic issues by making the demographic-related problem known in a specific way through socialist language and framings (Greenhalgh 2008, p.xvii). The politicisation of population growth in the early PRC had laid a solid foundation for Deng to securitise population explosion.

#### *4.1.5 Socialist Approach to Politicisation/Securitisation*

Nonetheless, the application of securitisation in an Asian non-democratic socialist state such as the PRC could be problematic, as the framework was developed in a strongly western context (see chapter 2.7.2.1). The securitisation framework is heavily criticised as not being applicable in a non-democratic state due to the absence of normal political procedures (therefore emergency measures cannot be defined) and the absence of relevant audiences who are supposed to be convinced (e.g. Huysmans 1998b; Williams 2003). Some scholars have followed the logic of the Copenhagen School and added extended explanations in order to make the framework usable in non-democratic states (e.g. Vuori 2008), yet so far there has been a lack of exploration of the distinctive way a socialist state securitises an issue.

Recognising the fact that the PRC is an authoritarian state, this research demonstrates a new perspective in regard to the way that a socialist state works in the process of politicisation and securitisation. In western securitisation, we are used to having dominant securitising actors to convince relevant audiences of an existential threat, leading to a top-down or a bottom-up securitisation, but this is not the case in non-democratic countries. It is true that there are various securitising actors in the socialist state but this research argues that the entire socialist state should be recognised as a giant network of securitising actors operating at different levels in a coherent manner.

This chapter demonstrates how different levels of propaganda agencies, e.g. provincial authorities, local functionaries, official and non-official press, related professionals such

as medical associations and academics, interpreted the speeches of the central Communist officials and carried out their own propaganda work accordingly across various sections of society. Even though one might argue that these acts were bandwagoning under a top-down propaganda approach, this chapter would argue that all these actors in the socialist system should be regarded as a single system – like an organism in which the brain consciously decides what to consume, and the other parts of the body work accordingly to digest and break down the food for the whole entity to absorb in order to survive.

The politicisation of population growth in the PRC followed the same logic as an organic system. Unlike the Copenhagen School that there are a few major securitising actors rhetorically compete with each other in order to achieve securitisation, in the socialist organic system there is a brain that initiator that order to start a politicisation/securitisation. This dissertation calls these actors Security Rhetoric Initiators (SRI). The CCP leaders decided to politicise the issues to deal with its demographic-related problems, then the whole system across different levels was mobilised automatically to actualise the politicisation/securitisation. These actors, serve as hands and legs of the organism, are the Reinforcing Security Practitioners (RSP) and this chapter will demonstrate how different levels of local birth planning officers echoed their CCP leaders on the issues of population and birth control. It also reveals how their interpretations and understanding constituted intrinsic social rules and norms and enforced them extrinsically to ensure birth control fitted the grand picture of Communist planning at their own level.

Socialist systems of checks and balances were formulated at different levels to create strong social influences and compel individuals to do the “right” thing, i.e. to give up their freedom to take personal family planning decisions and act under the party’ s will for the sake of Communist China. Both Marxism and the paternalistic leadership reinforced this notion of positive liberty, resulting in this socialist structure which facilitates a responsibility to act according to what is good for the development of the socialist state. Birth planning was therefore regarded as an obligation: one had to act accordingly; otherwise one would face significant peer pressure in local work cooperatives and be judged and discriminated against in social settings.

Unlike the traditional Copenhagen school definition of relevant audiences in the threat construction process, the relevant audiences in the PRC, in fact, facilitate the politicisation through forms of peer pressure. The only “relevant audiences” that needed to be convinced were the ones who disagreed with the central notion of politicising population growth, those who would have liked to preserve their own personal rights to have large families. This dissertation calls them Discontented Relevant Audiences (DRA). While the entire socialist state was a giant securitising actor, its various security agents (RSP) at different levels exerted significant pressure to convince the discontented of the need to undertake birth control for the development of the socialist state. The security rhetoric and practices of all these actors, including SRI, RSP and DRA, will be discussed throughout chapter 4 (politicisation), chapter 5 (securitisation), and chapter 6 (the politics of securitisation) in accordance with the combined analytical framework.

With such a coherent and self-sponsored structure, the result was almost guaranteed when the whole system of socialist propaganda was mobilised to politicise a particular issue. But such a system did not exist in the early rule of the PRC, and there was a time of chaos when Mao and other party leaders could not manage a consistent stance towards the rapid population growth, leading to confusion among those who were supposed to follow, and even political abuses to “convince” doubters and eliminate disagreements (Stage 1). This chapter highlights the process of ideological transformation by which the CCP broke through and formulated a coherent stance on population dynamics. The CCP officials used their speeches to initial the politicisation (and later securitisation) of population dynamics by constructing a rhetorical security with the socialist approach to birth planning (stage 2).

With a clear stance presented by the top officials, the socialist propaganda restarted in an effective and significant way so that various security agencies at different levels followed the rhetorical security claims and politicised population dynamics in a self-sponsored manner, forcing a revolution in the idea of family size and family planning, which was leveraged as the foundation for further securitisation (stage 3). The securitisation of birth control by massive socialist propaganda was actually a political experiment to examine to what extent the one-party state could use its capacity to influence



and control the thoughts of their citizens, and chapters 5 and 6 will unfold this politics of securitisation. As birth planning was a matter of party line and propaganda that must be forcefully strengthened (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, pp.90–91), population dynamics was constructed as a label representing the demographic-related threats which required the Chinese to give up their freedom of reproduction for the sake of the socialist state. This ideational manufacturing of fear and uncertainty over population dynamics drove the Chinese to rely on the CCP birth planning policy as a solution. The success of the Later, Longer, Fewer policy showed that perceptions, customs, beliefs and traditional values on family formation had been altered after decades of propaganda and ideological transformation.

This dissertation has revealed that there are significant differences in regard to security actors and security practices in a non-democratic socialist state such as the PRC. It further argues in chapters 5 and 6 that the securitisation of population dynamics by the one-child policy also followed the same socialist organic model of securitisation, i.e. the PRC acted as a giant securitising actor that encompasses different levels of securitising agencies. Even though the open door policy and the economic reform since 1978 has gradually transformed the PRC's socio-economic structure into a capitalist system (or what the CCP calls "socialism with Chinese characteristics"), which has considerably reduced the socialist bond as well as the structural power of being a collective securitising actor, the securitisation of population dynamics has still more or less worked with its looser structure for over 30 years. The securitising power of the coherent socialist organism has diminished since the economic reform as different security actors have less centripetal tension to follow and re-politicise/securitise the centre's claims, leading to a loss of control of its people (see chapter 6). Nevertheless, the PRC could not simply abandon the securitisation of population dynamics and the one-child policy without proper de-securitisation, as it has been securitised for more than 30 years. Chinese citizens need justifications to lift the policy, and the PRC spin it in another direction of population control from securitising population growth to population decline.

This chapter examines the ideological and ideational transformation in the early rule of the PRC by the politicisation of population growth. It divides the process of transformation into three distinctive stages: 1) ideological contradictions between Marxism and the reality in the PRC reduced the effectiveness of the promotion of birth control; 2) the CCP suffered from demographic-related problems during a dramatic population surge and the Chinese forged a socialist approach with Chinese characteristics, i.e. Maoism, to legitimise the limitation of births; and 3) Chinese families began to accept the idea of family limitation. Impressive results were achieved under the Later, Longer, Fewer policy in the 1970s which marked the ideational transformation in Chinese society. This chapter reveals that the ideational transformation was, in fact, a product of the massive socialist propaganda after the Communist officials had figured out a socialist approach to population control to solve the ideological contradictions with Maoism. The ideational transformation in family values, norms and planning has reassured the CCP that the socialist authoritarian regime had the ability to force a revolution in traditional values to maintain its political interests and legitimacy.

The politicisation of population dynamics laid a very good foundation for the Chinese to accept the later securitisation and to legitimise the one-child policy, which severely eroded personal freedom on reproductive decisions in Chinese society, as an emergency measure to deal with the demographic-related problems in the country. During the ideological and ideational transformation, the ideational relationships between various demographic-related problems and population growth were drawn to promote the practice of birth control. Having established this general perception of demographic-related problems and how everyone in the socialist state should deal with it together, it was easier for the CCP to press on smoothly with an even more extreme population policy. But was it necessary to have such a strict policy? What were the political considerations in the securitisation of population dynamics? Was the prolonged emergency measure, the one-child policy, a means of control through the governmentality of fear? All these questions will be addressed in the next two chapters, and this particular chapter will reveal the historical pretext for the securitisation as the ideological and ideational transformation had changed Chinese family values and beliefs during the early rule of the PRC.

#### 4.2 Stage 1: Ideological Contradictions on Population Control

In the history of China there were in fact quite a lot of rulers and scholars who had a very similar idea about the mismatched growth rate between population reproduction and food production, and how it caused various demographic-related issues and eroded the legitimacy of the rulers. Chinese Philosopher Yan Fu translated the famous book by Thomas Henry Huxley *Evolution and Ethics* and integrated the idea of natural selection from Darwin to construct his views on population dynamics. In the preface of his translated version of the book, Yan highlighted the need to increase the quality of the population to maintain a sustainable China (Yan 2004). He suggested that population growth in China should not be regarded an advantage as such growth was not a result of prosperity. He claimed that the Chinese followed their biological needs to multiply without practical considerations such as food supply, health care, and education.

In Yan's view, there was a vicious cycle which kept repeating the same painful process for generations, as infant mortality was extremely high due to the lack of resources. Therefore, he was one of the very first people to propose to educate people about the importance of reducing the number of birth in order to concentrate the existing resources for a better chance to preserve a higher quality of Chinese new-born for its future. In addition, Yan also considered population growth a prominent factor leading to a life cycle of dynasty replacement – as population accumulates during a peaceful era and reaches the critical level that the motherland can no longer support, famine and social disorder will arise and lead to rebellion to overthrow the current ruler in search of a better life. This was one of the very first theories of population in China which was close to western ideas such as Malthusian and traditionalist perspectives (if it failed to expand through war to satisfy the surging needs of the huge population, then the regime would fall due to lateral pressure, see chapter 3.1).

The Qianlong Emperor of the Qing dynasty also expressed his worry about a population explosion that surpassed the increase in arable land (生之者寡, 食之者眾, 朕甚憂之) during his rule. As primary production was the economic foundation of the

agrarian country, it was the obvious response for the Qing government to push very hard to increase the amount of cultivated land to support the living and boost the economy. “The cornerstone of politics is agronomic” (墾田務農為政之本) Qianlong stressed. Therefore, various policies were launched to encourage local governments to boost food production, such as motivation bonuses and tax reduction. Nonetheless, what had worried Yan and Qianlong happened a couple decades into the mid-late Qing, when the Taiping Rebellion rose under the name of the Heavenly Kingdom of Peace. Wang Shi-duo linked the Taiping Rebellion and demographic-related problems such as famine to the population explosion (Wang 1967). He urged the government to suppress the birth rate by extreme methods which violated women’s rights, including forced abortion and prohibition against second marriage for women.

Even though there were concerns about how population pressure would lead to war and the collapse of the dynasty, demography was never regarded as any kind of high politics by the leaders of China. One indication of this is the extremely limited demography data of the country throughout history, and this situation did not get any better after the Communist Chinese took over from the corrupt Kuomintang government in 1949. Various scholars have described the difficulties they faced: there was barely any official data on the party state’s population growth patterns, attributes, statistics, trends, and predictions (e.g. Tien 1980; Naquin and Rawski 1987, pp.106–107; Greenhalgh 2008). This situation has barely changed as the PRC still has very low transparency in publishing its national data in the twenty-first century.

On the one hand, this was due to the Communist tradition that regards demography as a social science, and therefore the subject was being undervalued historically. Greenhalgh says that she avoids using the term “demography” to describe population studies in the PRC as it is a different concept from Western demography (Greenhalgh 2008, p.47). The population studies in the party state are more likely to be categorised under “political demography”, which Goldstone regarded as a relatively new sub-field under political studies, where there are new demographic-related problems, such as youth bulges and ageing, and state resources are required to tackle all these problems through politicisation

of population dynamics (although in a materialistic problem solving manner, see chapter 3) (Goldstone *et al.* 2012).

On the other hand, the authoritarian government has shown hesitation in disclosing its internal data to the public as this can be easily leveraged against the rule of the party state. There were a lot of political struggles in the early rule of the party state, such as the Three-anti Campaign, the Five-Anti Campaign and the Anti-Rightist Movement in the 50s, leading to extreme caution among the Chinese to be “politically correct” and reluctant to express any opinion on sensitive topics such as population control. The political situation was unstable, and people would seize every opportunity to beat their political rivals by labelling them “rightists” or “Malthusian” and claiming all “population problems” were an invention to weaken the Communist rule.

In such a political climate, official data released was carefully selected to echo the prevailing propaganda in order to play safe and strengthen the construction of the ideational relationship between rapid population growth and its negative effects. Limited records on the demography of the country actually meant that Chinese society failed to realise the existence/seriousness of demographic-related threats in the country, especially during the early years of the PRC. This knowledge gap, in fact, created more favourable conditions for the CCP to construct the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics.

This section has revealed the first stage of the politicisation of population dynamics, i.e. ideological contradictions between Marxism and the real situation faced by the Chinese in the early PRC. During this period, the CCP insisted on following Marxism, the ideology that legitimised its rule after it had driven out the democratic Republic of China (RoC) government. It stood on the same side as Marx in strongly resisting the idea of “population problems” and “population control”. Below is a quotation from Marx critiquing Malthus’s essay on the principle of population:

Malthus sets out to prove that “the greatest part of the sufferings of the lower classes of society is attributable exclusively to themselves and that the principal and most permanent cause of poverty has little or no relation to forms of government, or the unequal division of property; and that as the rich do not, in reality, possess the power of find employment and maintenance for the poor, the poor cannot, in the nature of things...” In his conclusion – manipulated to suit the purposes of the propertied classes – Malthus attempts to attribute poverty and unemployment to the excessively rapid reproduction of the working classes (Marx 1957, pp.110–111; summarised by Chandrasekhar 1967, p.61).

In line with Marx’s response to the idea of population control, the CCP reacted in a similar manner when Dean Acheson, the former Secretary of State of the United States, expressed his fear that the PRC’s population surge would outpace its food production (Becker 1998), which was basically following Malthus’s logic that geometrical progression of population growth will surpass arithmetical progression and lead to various demographic-related problems (Mathlus 1976). Mao replied that

It is a very good thing that the PRC has a big population. Even if its population multiplies many times, the one-party state is fully capable of finding a solution; the solution is production. The absurd argument of Western bourgeois economists like Malthus that increases in food cannot keep pace with increases in population was not only thoroughly refuted in theory by Marxists long ago but has also been completely exploded by the realities in the Soviet Union and the “Liberated Areas of China after the revolution”...revolution plus production can solve the problem of feeding the population (Economy 2010, p.49; Mao 1961, p.4).

Disagreements with Acheson’s claim still exist extensively in Chinese academic journal articles. Even though the first census of the PRC in 1953 indicated that there was a sharp increase in population (about 10 million per year), Mao still took a typical Marxist

perspective on population growth, asserting in 1954 that manpower was the capital of the socialist country (Tsao 2010, p.12).

Even though the Communist Chinese appeared to be taking a very strong stance in resisting population control, the CCP, in fact, remained relatively “flexible” in exercising Marxist premises generally (JEC 1972, pp.221–222). This was clearly because they recognised the distinctive historical, cultural, economic and political background of the Asian agricultural society, and therefore the CCP could not simply apply the product of western industrial society, i.e. Marxism, off-the-shelf to the PRC.

So, why did the party take such a strong stance on the particular matter of demography? What were the reasons for the Communist Chinese to reject the western idea of demographic-related problems and the need for population control? The undeniable ideological conflict was a prominent reason but there were other factors, historical and cultural, contributing to the rejection of family limitation in the early PRC.

#### *4.2.1 Cultural and Historical Resistance to the idea of Family Limitation*

Chandrasekhar says that it is important to understand the Chinese traditional ideas about family size as they had significant influences on the effectiveness of the population policy (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.59). He discusses the teachings of Confucius and Mencius, which provided great support for the idea of having a large family. Confucius regarded family as the cornerstone of all relationships in society, saying in the Analects that a leader “should be well cultivated in order to put his house in order. With a regulated family, he should take one step forward to govern his country well and eventually bring peace to the world” (修身齊家治國平天下). It was a traditional procession that linked individuals and society which was to a certain extent consistent with Marxist ideas in the sense of collective social planning. Chandrasekhar cites Mencius’s claim that ‘there are three things which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of them’ (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.59) but he fails to recognise the context in which Mencius said that; he was referring to a case where one did not report to his parent about his marriage, in which the disrespect and

irresponsibility were the major unfilial act. It is true that Confucianism emphasises the responsibility to maintain the continuity of the bloodline, but the essence of the idea is to be responsible for your given role.

When Confucius expressed his view that an ideal government is when the “emperor is the emperor and the minister is the minister; when the father is the father and the son is the son” (君君，臣臣，父父，子子), it established a father-son relationship between the emperor and his ministers, and thus a family-oriented governing ideology was formed during imperial ages. This feudal political system was being challenged by modern ideas of liberty and democracy and the imperial Qing dynasty was overthrown by the RoC.

Nonetheless, the family-oriented governing culture remained unchanged in both the RoC and the PRC, which led to serious corruption and authoritarianism. A change in political system does not guarantee a changing mentality in society in the case of the PRC. When Graddol reviewed how modernisation was associated with changes in socio-economics, language, beliefs, and ideas, he pointed out that the PRC was juggling processes of both modernisation and post-modernisation at the same time: ideologically, the party state was still in the process of transforming its traditional ideas of nation-state, its practices, and customs, i.e. undergoing the process of modernisation, while economically, it was already acting in a post-modern, transnational manner due to globalisation (Graddol 2006, p.20).

In the early rule of the CCP, the strong family-oriented tradition persisted. It was a responsibility for the Chinese to multiply for the sake of their own family and for the prosperity of the country, especially after a century of warfare, notably WWII and the civil wars with the KMT government. The ethos of having a large family to rebuild the party state was reinforced by the historical pride that the Chinese had, regarding their country as the superior “central kingdom” before the world wars. When the CCP came to power, they promised a prosperous future with a large and growing population, recalling the historical (latent) pride of being the chosen nation with 600 million Chinese in order to gain support from their people. Chandrasekhar called this ‘the chamber of commerce’ and he also



claimed that it actually projected the belief that the PRC was going to rise as a great socialist state, with its population, which had long exceeded that of the Soviet “big brother”, eventually accounting for one-third of the population among Communist states and a quarter of the population of the world in the Cold War period (Chandrasekhar 1967, pp.59–60).

Taking all these cultural and historical factors into account has enriched the context of the optimistic view of the CCP officials and explained why the Communist Chinese had such a strong resistance to the idea of birth control. These cultural and historical factors, in fact, reinforced the Marxist idea of having large families among the Chinese. This strengthened the faith of the Communist leaders in the idea of huge population. As Mao put it during the early rule of the PRC “it’s easy to get things done with many people” (人多好辦事). In addition, Mao regarded having a massive population as a shield to resist nuclear attack. He said at the World Communist Representation Meeting in Russia in 1957 ‘I’m not afraid of nuclear war. There are 2.7 billion people in the world; it doesn’t matter if some are killed. China has a population of 600 million; even if half of them are killed, there are still 300 million people left. I’m not afraid of anyone’ (Tian 2013). Although the CCP raised the banner as a Communist party, there was still a very heavy traditional military concern expressed in relation to the growth of a huge population to survive a nuclear strike.

In line with Mao’s position, the CCP official newspaper, the People’s Daily, criticised the idea of birth control as a threat to the socialist state, ‘a means of killing the Chinese without shedding blood’ (Grivoyannis 2012, p.11). The PRC regarded the burgeoning human resources as assets that could be mobilised for the development of the party state and its rise as a “first world power”. This was consistent with the thought of Marx and Engels that ‘the productive forces under the control of mankind are unlimited. The application of capital labour and science will raise the returns from land limitlessly’ (Marx and Engels 1956, p.616). So they regarded population growth under Marxism as a golden rule that a greater labour force contributes to better well-being of the society.

Nonetheless, as discussed in chapter 3, Marxism fails to recognise the idea of diminishing marginal returns and the carrying capacity of the environment, and also overlooked the fact that in reality there are limited resources which can be harnessed for production. In addition, even though there was a population surplus in the PRC, the party state was still incapable of converting its surplus population into military and economic advantages due to its low technological and educational level, according to the lateral pressure theory (see chapter 3). The relatively slow development could not keep pace with the rising needs of the Chinese new-borns, leading to an array of demographic-related threats in the party state in the mid-50s. Despite the bold words and the strong stance in opposing the idea of population control, reality pulled the CCP back to reconsider a socialist approach to tackling all these demographic-related problems, leading later to the propaganda to politicise population growth in the PRC.

#### *4.2.1.1 First Turning Point in Stage 1 Politicisation*

In summer 1953 came the first turning point for the population policy in the party state. The Chinese Communists had reconsidered their population policy and appointed the ministry of public health to take up the propaganda work to promote its very first family limitation program, aiming to educate the Chinese to have a new understanding of the idea of birth control (JEC 1972, p.226). This was the very first attempt by the party state to utilise public resources to deal with population growth. The reason why the CCP suddenly changed its mind was that there were increasing social problems due to the booming population. Acheson commented on the urgent food security in the PRC: ‘The first problem which every Chinese government has had to face is that of feeding its population. So far none have succeeded’ (Angus *et al.* 2011, pp.85–86). ). Indeed, Acheson’s comment was fair as China had already suffered 4 severe famines in half a decade, and more than 40 million people died of hunger between 1920 and 1962. Even though there was a land reform by the Communist government in 1950 that tried to redistribute the land ownership to the peasants, and measures to boost agricultural production such as application of fertilisers and crop rotation, the actual production of grain in the party state did not increase at a rate that could meet the surging demand of the skyrocketing population (Yang 2012; Dikötter

2010), which proved that Malthus's principle of population also applied in the PRC regardless of its political ideology. The strong resistance to birth control for historical, cultural and ideological reasons had blinded the Chinese to the reality they faced until the actual threat appeared in front of them.

Another grave mistake which made the situation even worse was a general upward bias in reporting grain figures to the socialist crop system in the Chinese society, as peasants tended to report higher figures than the actual food production in order to earn themselves recognition as 'productive contributors to the socialist state' (JEC 1972, p.225) (this tendency was later identified as one of the major reasons for the Great Chinese Famine from 1958 to 1961). This kind of practice was common in the PRC and not only restricted to food production alone. For example, afforestation statistics were based on the reports by the local officials, yet these officials also tended to report higher figures to falsify better performances (Ross 1988, p.37). Such practices projected a false impression that Malthus's principle of population was wrong about the relatively slow increase in food production, as the reality told a different story in later Great Chinese famine. The CCP, therefore, regarded its policy as unproblematic and believed the Marxist path for the party state was correct.

Regarding food production, the CCP took 3 years to redistribute the 700 million mu arable land (1 mu equals 0.0667 hectares) nationwide. After this land reform, collectivisation started in 1953 when agricultural cooperatives were formed to utilise the farmland for the development of the socialist state. Nonetheless, as there was no significant increase in food production in real terms (despite the fact that recorded numbers increased), the fear of food shortage overshadowed the Chinese, leading to a run on public sales of government grain reserves. CCP official Deng Zihui publicly admitted that the crop harvested in 1952 was not enough to satisfy the needs of the surging population (Aird 1990, p.20), leading to a sharp bidding up of food prices in both rural and urban areas in late 1954. Then, at the 7<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the CCP, the Communist leaders released a statement to promote the need for birth control:

Birth control matters to the well-being of the Chinese and should be regarded as an important policy. In these historic circumstances, for the sake of the state, families and our next generations, the Communist party agrees to carry out proper birth control. Local officials and fellow citizens (except for ethnic minorities) should promote this policy in order to actualise the idea of family limitation (Xin 2009, pp.5–6, translated from Chinese).

In the same year, Ma's new theory on population was presented, along with Shao's article to increase the awareness of contraception among Chinese citizens. In one of Ma's articles 'Population control and scientific research', he revealed that birth rate was around 30 per 1000 in the early 1950s, leading to a serious possibility of famine as there was not enough arable land to support such growth (Xin 2009, p.6). However, there were a lot of sceptics about Ma and Shao's position, who insisted the party state needed manpower and those new-borns would be the solution to support the entire Chinese population. Population control was a politically sensitive issue that contradicted Marxist ideology, which is why patriotic Chinese strongly opposed it.

In order to solve this kind of political disagreement, the Hundred Flowers Campaign was launched in 1956 to encourage Chinese citizens to express their views on various sensitive political issues. The campaign name was a metaphor for allowing an array of thoughts to be heard and discussed in order to allow a greater diversity of art and science to flourish like hundreds of flowers. Our major focus is its influence on the politicisation of population growth. Mao claimed that in order to actualise a comprehensive birth planning programme, society should voluntarily achieve the goal together (Li and Duan 2010). Economy identified the root of his thought by reviewing Mao's earliest essay, which stated how Mao had learned from the failed reform experience of Shang Yang, minister of the Qin dynasty, that a reform could not be achieved by merely rewriting the law in black and white; it should be accompanied by 'a continuous cycle of campaigns and mass mobilisation efforts' (Economy 2010, p.47). Therefore the Hundred Flowers Campaign was designed to be an open platform for various discussions and public debates to encourage the Chinese to deal in a collective manner with different problems including

demographic-related problems such as food storage, mother and children's health care and education.

In the same year, the Communist leaders continued politicising population growth by questioning the need for population growth in various situations. In the Supreme State Conference in February 1957, Mao stated the “contradiction” between population growth and economic development, and the speech was later published in the book *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao* (MacFarquhar *et al.* 1989, Chapter 3). He was taking a mild stance which simply acknowledged the fact that the Chinese should bear in mind that it was a country of 600 million that stood out from the rest of the world. He was hinting that population growth could be a boon and bane at the same time. He claimed that he was proud of the party state having huge manpower for production and economic development, yet, on the other hand, he pointed out that boundless growth would leave the Chinese ‘nothing to eat; and with advances in hygiene, sanitation, inoculation, the babies will be so many that it will be disastrous, with everyone being of venerable age and eminent virtue’ (MacFarquhar *et al.* 1989, p.159). This in fact was the very time that the top CCP officials directly connected various demographic-related threats to the population explosion.

Consequently, Mao further made a connection between population growth and socialist planning to solve the demographic-related problems as he said:

[...] humanity is most inept at managing itself. It has plans for industrial production, the production of textiles, the production of household goods, the production of steel; [but] it does not have plans for the production of humans. This is anarchism, no government, no organisation, no rules. If [we] go this way, I think humanity will prematurely fall into stride and hasten toward destruction (MacFarquhar *et al.* 1989, p.159).

This was the very first attempt by Mao to both follow the logic of socialist planning and strive for an extensive explanation to legitimise the implementation of birth control by

connecting the socialist idea of state planning with the idea of birth planning. Such rhetorical security connections began to demonstrate their success in the second stage of ideological transformation and finally led to the politicising of demographic-related problems.

Mao proposed establishing a planned birth department and a birth control committee, and nominated Shao Lizi and Minister Li Dequan to organise both government organs. Half a year later, in the 8<sup>th</sup> Central Committee meeting of the CCP, Premier Chou echoed the call of politicising population growth and put the rhetoric more explicitly, linking population growth (the matter of birth) to demographic-related issues (health issues of women and children) by claiming that family limitation was a Communist policy to liberate women from ceaseless childbearing and ensure children got better care (Xin 2009, p.6). ‘Birth control is a natural and urgent demand from the masses which served the interests of the Chinese women and children which is suitable for the construction of the socialist state’ Chow said (JEC 1972, p.268). In line with improving women’s right in the PRC, there was also a marriage law reform in 1950 which banned arranged marriages (Zhou 2003, pp.69–70). Although from a western perspective it would be logically inconsistent to on the one hand free women from arranged marriage while on the other hand restricting their freedom on reproductive decisions, in the CCP they did not view it from an individual perspective but from a collective one that focused on the interests of the Communist state. Realising this enables us to understand the social propaganda to politicise population growth in stage 2.

If such ideological changes had already started in the late 50s, why did it take the PRC almost 3 decades to achieve the politicisation of population growth? The reasons are two-fold: 1) there was a very strong Orthodox Marxism doggedness which refused to accept the extended explanation, and 2) there was a power struggle within the party in which population control was leveraged as a political issue to attack rivals as “rightists” or “politically incorrect”. The propaganda work in politicising population growth had very little impact in the first stage. The birth department and birth control committee proposed by Mao in 1957 were not founded until 1964 and until then, the burden of this very first

mobilisation on family limitation fell on the shoulders of the Ministry of Public Health (Scharping 2013, Chapter 7.1.2).

The Ministry of Health was responsible for directing provincial and local health and birth control agencies to start various propaganda campaigns in order to generate social pressure and discourse in Chinese society. However, the first campaign was disrupted by the political struggles in the party state. The Hundred Flower Campaign was overtaken by the Anti-Rightist Movement in 1957. This meant the Hundred Flower Campaign turned into a “witch hunt” rather than facilitating different voices as it was originally designed to do. Despite various demographic-related issues in the PRC, any attempt to ease the pain of population growth with family limitation was labelled as “rightist and western”. The situation was complicated by the fact that the CCP did not stop such political wrangling but rather took a step back and allowed it to continue.

Interestingly, even while the Anti-Rightist movement was under way, Mao still expressed his ideas of socialist planning in population control, and there was no one who dared to either criticise him or support him explicitly on this politically sensitive issue. In 1958, the Chairman proposed a ten-year plan on family limitation, which consisted of three years of propaganda, three years of popularisation and four years of universal implementation (White 2006, pp.38–39). This implies he was trying to make a long-term effort to construct rhetoric in favour of the politicisation of population dynamics, i.e. using public resources to tackle all demographic-related problems.

Another top official, Chen Muhua, Deputy Premier and head of the State Council’s Planned Reproduction Leading Group, announced various measures to reduce the fertility rate and mentioned considering punishment for families having excessive children (Tien 1980, p.ix). In Chen’s speeches, he portrayed a campaign that would strongly promote single-birth families and aim at reducing natural population growth from 12 per 1000 in 1978 to 5 per 1000 by 1985, which was another discursive construction placing population dynamics in the rhetorical structure of national strategic planning. Yet even the top officials themselves were not consistent enough on whether they wanted to increase the Chinese

population or not, as Mao in that period also expressed contradictory views that people are the solution to various problems and claimed that it would be great if the country could have 200 million more in the same period of time (Li and Duan 2010, p.2).

Aird pointed out that there were barely any middle or low-ranking party officials expressing their support for family limitation (Aird 1990, p.21). Mid and low-level security practitioners in the Ministry of Health, lacked the political and monetary support to supervise the mass propaganda campaign required for the gigantic country (JEC 1972, p.259). There were numerous agents across different levels that the ministry needed to coordinate and it was impossible to pass on the knowledge in promoting birth control without strong support from the Communist government.

Other politicising agents like the party officials and Chinese intellectuals attempted to express their supporting views towards family limitation with their theories and demographic data. Ma submitted his population theory at the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the first National People's Congress in July 1957. His paper took demographic data from the population census of 1953 and demonstrated that the party state was not able to afford population growth that exceeded an annual rate of 2%, as the overpopulation would consume a considerable amount of the country's surplus capital, hindering the development of the socialist state (Ma 1979). As Ma stated in his book *New Population Theory*, population growth had to be regulated in order to increase capital accumulation, limit consumption, accelerate industrialisation and finally actualise socialism as Lenin proposed. Another Chinese scholar Chung Hui-Lan echoed the call by demonstrating that the Chinese population would surge at a geometrical rate by his projection, although, to maintain his political correctness, he claimed Malthus was "wrong and reactive" (JEC 1972, p.242).

Among Chinese academics, there were a lot of suggestions to maintain population growth at a rate the country could support, by means of contraception and late marriage. Sociologists like Wu pointed out that increasing people's productivity was a better way than increasing the labour force to transform the PRC into a modern industrial country (Wu 1957) , and such views are actually in line with Choucrist's view that a country's



technological level is critical to determine the growth rate that a country can sustain (Choucri 1974). Yet all these ideas from the academics were being heavily criticised during the Anti-rightist Movement because of their “rightness” (and ironically all these practices were adopted in later campaigns).

Cultural resistance among traditional Chinese (especially in rural areas) also facilitated such political abuse directed at party officials and scholars during the movement. Due to the political instabilities, the Communist state did not have its second population census until 1964, by which time the population had already increased by 200 million since the founding of the PRC. Chinese academics today are still debating whether such rapid growth was a result of condemning scholars like Ma. The political nature of population dynamics in the PRC also distinguishes it from the western scientific approach in dealing with the issue, and therefore Greenhalgh pointed out that she avoids using the term “demography” in the case of the party state (Greenhalgh 2008, p.47). In 1957 the party’s newspaper actually condemned scholars using population dynamics as creating a political conspiracy which was not a ‘question of scholarship, it is, in fact, a question of genuine class struggle, a question of serious political struggle’ (Shapiro 2001, p.41).

In addition to that fact, population dynamics was not addressed with a scientific approach. In 1958 the Communists introduced a household registration (Hukou) system which included information on Chinese family structure that could have been extremely effective in monitoring its demographic pattern over time. However, there is no sign that this information was shared or used by the Ministry of Health for the propaganda campaign at this stage. In such a political atmosphere, mid and low-level security practitioners were taking the “correct” decision to stick with Orthodox Marxism against the idea of family limitation. People’s Daily writer Pai Chien-Hua was one of them who followed the political correctness and asserted that ‘the existence of over 600,000,000 people is the sources of wealth of our great country and the basis of its socialist reconstruction...in the People’s Democracies, man is the most precious form of capital, that master of his fate, the conscious creator of his own happiness...’ (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.62).

The first family planning campaign yielded very little effect in constructing a security rhetoric that favoured the politicising of population dynamics. The propaganda vanished in spring 1958 with the Communist state heading into one of its greatest tragedies, the “Great Leap Forward” or the ‘great Chinese famine’, which forced the CCP to confront their ideological contradictions in order to actualise the politicisation of population growth in the early PRC.

#### *4.3 Stage 2: Disruptions of Propaganda and Ideological Transformation*

The second stage transformation was a particularly painful one with enormous political struggles, i.e. the so-called Great Leap Forward (the great Chinese famine) and the “Cultural Revolution”. In 1958, by which time the population had increased to about 660, the birth control propaganda was withdrawn by the CCP (JEC 1972, p.275; Chandrasekhar 1967, p.57). The major reason for the withdrawal was that the idea of population control contradicted the “Great Leap Forward” movement then under way in the party state. Dikötter pointed out that Mao was resentful about the fact that his economic policy had been turned down by other top officials and that therefore he mobilised the rural Chinese to start collectivisation in agricultural production, so the “leap” began as a political struggle for Mao to take back control of economic policy (Dikötter 2010).

The connection between this political struggle and birth control was that Mao needed the support from the rural Chinese and therefore he made a political choice to shift back to being an orthodox Marxist who encouraged high fertility in order to please the labour-intensive farmers. Meisner considered that Mao might have been influenced by the Soviet experience that the “primitive socialist accumulation” was yielded by exploiting the rural peasants, and therefore the promotion of agricultural collectivisation in rural areas was a solution to ease the pain brought on by the country’s industrialisation (Meisner 1999, p.207).

Economy also regarded Mao’s mobilisation of the rural Chinese as a means to demonstrate that human beings could conquer nature through socialist practice (Economy

2010, p.50) but this explanation falls short of acknowledging the fact that Mao did support family limitation prior to this massive mobilisation (see stage 1 above). Such contradictions have revealed that both Marxist ideology and population dynamics were simply political levers for Mao to maintain power within the party state (although the Soviets also used other political concepts such as the right to self-determination as tactical instruments to justify class conflict and “social justice”, it is difficult to determine if this kind of political leverage is an authoritarian tradition or not). There were various prominent and catastrophic incidents such as the so-called Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, revealing the significant political power conflicts initiated by Mao, which the thesis regards as a form of extreme pragmatism.

The discussion now turns to how the so-called Great Leap Forward affected food production and later led to the Great Chinese Famine. The Chinese were, in fact, sceptical as to whether food production could be boosted, as Mao (and Marxism) promised, through the use of manpower as a solution to conquer nature during the “Leap Forward”. Mao raised the idea of people’s communes in both agricultural and industrial development, claiming that because ‘the masses of the people possess unlimited creative power’ (Mao 2014, p.269) they would help the Chinese to gain prosperity. The picture painted by the party officials for the rural Chinese was that if people worked together, production would be maximised. The first people’s commune was formed in Henan province and Mao called it a ‘model for a nation-wide commune movement’ (Thaxton 2008, p.107). There were other successful cases in the PRC but Thaxton’s work also described dissatisfaction among farmers as their private means of production were replaced by the people’s communes, highlighting the resistance of Da Fo Village and how it was labelled as “counter-revolutionary”. Rigid enforcement of Mao’s economic policy required the rural Chinese to obey without hesitation.

When the people’s communes were formed, it created serious pressure on local officials in terms of boosting food production. There were numerous data that indicated a tendency to over-report the grain production nationwide (Becker 1998; Dikötter 2010; Yang 2012) and this was because food production figures were expected to follow the

direction indicated by the political beacon, i.e. Mao, or else workers risked being sacked and condemned. Thaxton noticed there was scattered local dissatisfaction and reports of famine, yet all these reports were ignored by Mao (Thaxton 2008, p.28), and later led to the Great Chinese Famine.

In line with the people's communes that were supposed to bring prosperity to the rural areas, Mao's utopian solution inevitably demanded a larger population to overcome the PRC's poverty. In the party's newspaper the People's Daily, Mao raised the notion that 'man can surely conquer nature' (Shapiro 2001, p.67). The party chairman was trying to boost the nation's morale (especially the rural poor) to share with him the dream of a rising PRC by having a massive workforce. Chandrasekhar regarded this as a discursive means to stimulate the pride of the "middle kingdom" that the country used to have before the CCP's rule (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.59). This kind of (latent) national pride still persists in contemporary PRC when they stress they are the world's largest market with 1.3 billion people.

When Mao made his famous statement that 'Of all things in the world, people are the most precious', he went on to portray the relationship between people and nature as one in which 'under the leadership of the Communist Party, as long as there are people, every kind of miracle can be performed' (Mao 1961, p.454). This notion ignited agricultural workers' hopes of rapid economic development and industrialisation in the countryside. As the idea of 'more people, more production' perfectly suited these traditional Chinese peasants, the population increased by almost 300 million from 1949 to mid-70s and there were millions of deaths during the great famine. Greenhalgh and Winckler summarised it in one sentence: 'socialist institutions encouraged more births than they could support' (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, p.60).

When the CCP encouraged population growth for economic development, they received fake and overstated reports of food production as the provincial governments were under serious political pressure to make the numbers "right". This was one of the main reasons for the outbreak of the great Chinese famine. As grain production appeared to be

leaping forward, the party leaders were being reinforced in their belief that Marxist teaching on population might be correct. The anti-Malthusian stance was strengthened as the Minister of Food, Sha, told the public that Malthus was wrong on the lagging behind of food production compared with population growth. Sha put it in an explicit way that 'politics can yield food grains' and reassured the Chinese that there were reliable food supplies for the rapidly growing number of Chinese people (Sha 1959). Shapiro used the term 'the language of urgency' which sums up how the CCP condensed its political ideas into slogans which were advertised in workplaces and common areas, for example 'with many people, strength is great' (Shapiro 2001, pp.34, 71). The notions were radical and aimed to destroy the existing social and political practices in order to achieve as high a level of industrialisation as Britain and the US had.

The manner in which it was put discursively was extremely similar to the process of securitisation and the adoption of emergency measures. Mao had expressed his discontent about the progress of economic development and therefore pursued an 'unusual' path to speed up the modernisation by emphasising the degree of 'urgency' – urgency in raising agricultural yields and urgency in ridding China of pests (both biological and political) (ibid). These two urgencies were related to the twin issues of security and population dynamics. The first was based on the Marxist idea of increasing productivity by increasing the workforce while the second was intended to discredit and eliminate any dissent through the "leap forward" and "cultural revolution" for the development of the socialist state. The family limitation propaganda was actually a causality of these political imperatives, as in their interpretations restricting births meant restricting economic development and industrialisation. This would ultimately mean opposing Mao's leadership, which was intolerable in the authoritarian state.

The Joint Economic Committee of the United States commented on the ideological dichotomy that the birth control campaign was 'marked by a belief in economic determinism, administrative pragmatism, and concern over the balance of food and population' whereas the "leap forward" was 'the offspring of political voluntarism, administrative enthusiasm, and a manic confidence in solubility of all problems' (JEC 1972,

p.276). The Chinese were trapped in the agricultural social mentality that was not able to resist the myth of Marxism that encouraged them to pursue massive manpower for labour-intensive agricultural and industrial production. This message was encapsulated in Mao's speech, as mentioned earlier, when he said that he would be happy to see the PRC population grow to 800 million as 'the more people the better' and 'men are the most valuable of all things in the world'. Such logic drew the uneducated farm labourers to follow Mao's path with their "strength of the people", and they were mobilised by Mao as a revolutionary force to strengthen his power in the CCP (JEC 1972, p.282).

There were, however, objections: the point was raised that the population are consumers and therefore greater population implies greater consumption, an idea that Choucri and Malthus would agree with. But party officials such as Liu pointed out that people are first of all *producers*, and claimed that their views were consistent with Marxism-Leninism (Liu 1958). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that there was still practical birth control work under way, such as legalising abortion and sterilisation, production of contraceptives and reducing party members' subsidies for child support, which went in the opposite direction to the rhetoric of the CCP's economic and political strategies during the "Leap Forward" period. These ideological contradictions had to be resolved to provide a consistent political rhetoric of persuasion in order to politicise population growth. The tragedy brought about by the CCP's inconsistent economic and population policy, i.e. the great Chinese famine, gave the party state one of its toughest lessons – that Malthus was right.

In Becker's book *Hungry Ghost: Mao's Secret Famine*, he estimated the deaths of the great Chinese famine at 30-60 million in 1958-1961 (Becker 1998). The fact that provincial officials and farmers over-reported grain production figures contributed to the tragedy, but Becker also uncovered how ordinary Chinese kept the famine as a "secret" because the family could get extra food for themselves if they remained silent about the death of their relatives from hunger (Becker 1998, p.199). No matter how many deaths were caused by the problems such as falsification of food production, famine, population growth and its

rising food demand, these were all regarded as “political problems” due to the highly sensitive power struggle.

The CCP treated all (demographic-related) problems as a “principal danger” that might give encouragement to the “rightists” to “slander” the “leap forward” by exaggerating its “defects” (JEC 1972, pp.283–284). The failure of the “leap forward” and the great Chinese famine had clearly delivered two messages to the CCP that increasing manpower *ad infinitum* was gravely wrong (Zhao 2009, p.75). In 1960, the agriculture minister Liao admitted that primary production was constrained by natural conditions that could not be fully controlled by mortals (Liao 1961). This was actually a violation of what Marxist ideology dictated and amounted to an admission of their mistake in blindly following Marxism and ignoring the reality that millions of people were starving to death.

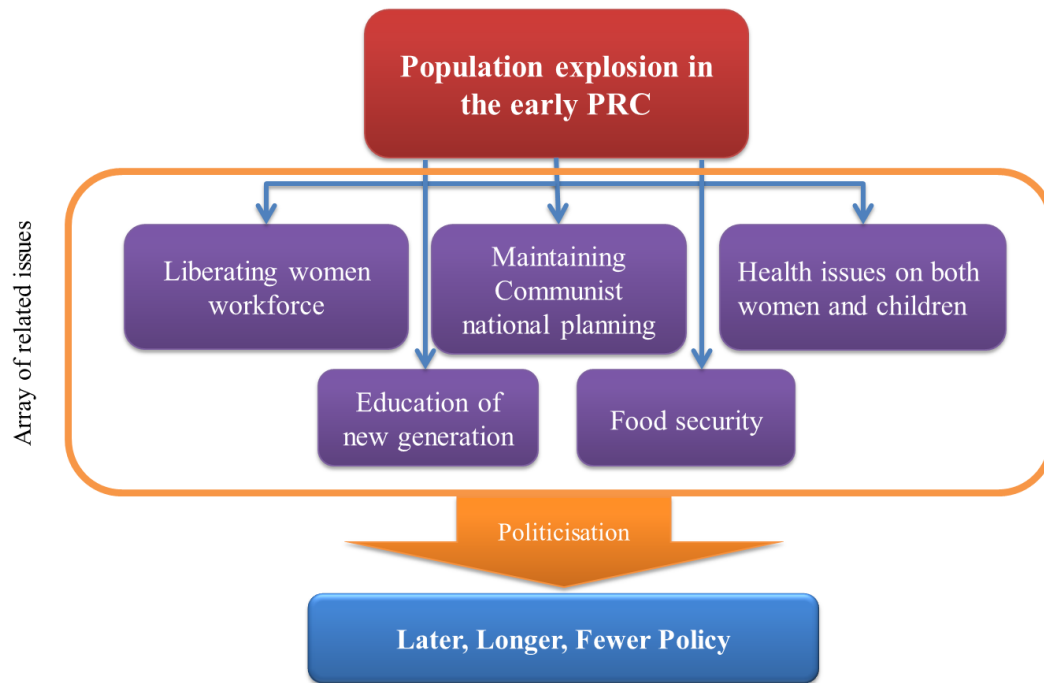
#### *4.3.1 Changing Propaganda tactics after the Great Chinese Famine*

When facing a huge defeat in the great famine, the CCP was pulled back from the stance that blindly over-emphasising ideological notions and forced to face the reality that the Chinese population had indeed leapt to 600 million in total despite 30-60 million deaths (Chandrasekhar 1967, p.57). Under the shadow of the great Chinese famine, the second propaganda campaign avoided stressing the negative outcomes of population explosion, as the Chinese had already experienced vividly the horror of unregulated population growth and realised how painful and deadly it could be.

The CCP then employed discursive tactics emphasising the benefits of population control in order to create positive incentives for the Chinese to act accordingly (JEC 287). The propaganda portrayed a ‘new way of life’ that would be made possible by practising birth planning. The benefits of birth control highlighted were that both children and mothers would get better health care, better education and more job opportunities if the population growth slowed down according to plan. The propaganda also focused on promoting later marriage and childbearing, claiming that more mature parents would be

able to take better care of their new-borns, which would be ideal for both the parents and the children (see figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Politicisation of Population Growth in the early PRC: Ideational Connections drawn by Birth Planning Propaganda



In addition, the CCP advertised that having children later would help the Chinese to concentrate on the career of local officers as they followed their leaders' rhetoric. When New York Times journalist Edgar Snow went to the PRC and interviewed the top Communist officials in 1964, Premier Chow expressed his confidence in implementing birth planning in urban areas (Snow 1970), revealing that the party had a clear idea that birth control had to be brought in after experiencing the great Chinese famine. In the following year, Chou claimed that carrying out birth planning was a socialist approach to contradicting Malthusian ideas (Xin 2009, p.13). The premier regarded reproduction planning as an advanced idea that only a socialist state could carry out as everything is done according to plan in the PRC – 'It is a working class approach to birth planning (for the party state), which is different from the bourgeois approach that aimed for personal benefits (ibid). Although the CCP's official stance towards population began to stabilise,



Mao expressed his dissatisfaction to Snow in 1965 about the progress in rural areas, where was strong resistance to birth planning and late marriage and childbearing (Snow 1965).

The channels of propaganda were loosely organised as there was no central Communist agency to supervise and monitor the overall campaign until 1964, when the CCP formed a family planning Commission to take the lead in this massive project (Zheng 2009, p.43). The duties of this new organisation were to coordinate family limitation policy in various provincial offices and also to serve as a role model to demonstrate to the mid-level officers how to monitor everyday practice in lower-level local birth control units such as factories, communes, schools and clinics (JEC 1972, p.295; Scharping 2013, chapter 7). In line with the second campaign to promote birth control, the CCP provided positive motivations in the forms of free contraception and condoms mostly in urban areas. As a result, progress was more apparent in cities, where the birth rate was reduced by up to 50% in 3-4 years, whereas in the rural areas, home to 80% of the total Chinese population, there was barely any progress at this stage, to Mao's dissatisfaction.

Resistance to the idea of birth control shifted somewhat, away from the traditional and cultural opposition to the safety of contraception and sterilisation, and whether there was a choice for young couples. There was a fear stirring, especially in the rural areas due to the generally low education level, which prevented people from clearly understanding the risks of these practices. One would argue that the birth control was supposed to target the younger generation who had a higher education level which enabled them to decide what kind of practices would best fit their situation. There was scientific research on contraception carried out in the 1960s but it had only a limited effect. As Greenhalgh argued, the Chinese were not used to being persuaded by science but by political attitudes and ideology (Greenhalgh 2008, Chapter 2).

Undoubtedly, Mao recognised this tendency and therefore he launched a socialist education movement that repeatedly emphasised the heroic history of how Mao led the CCP to "liberate" the country (JEC 1972, p.291). It was a rhetorical construction that the current "better days" under the rule of the CCP had come at the cost of the "past bitterness"

of the socialist revolution undertaken by the party, and therefore the young people should take care not to be eroded by “bourgeois” ideas during the “peaceful and pleasant” days, regardless of the fact that there were great political struggles within the CCP and an array of demographic-related problems in the country. This was also the start of the second campaign to persuade the Chinese through education to place the nation’s interests ahead of individuals’. As Fu put in his article ‘The positive significance of planned families’ was that birth planning was ‘not altogether a personal matter’ (Fu 1963). The overall discourse portrayed a new way of life through socialist birth planning for the PRC. This beautiful dream was offered to the Chinese by the propaganda – a prosperous future would be guaranteed by effective resource allocation, as the party knew exactly what amount of goods and services it needed to provide, according to the relationship between population and production, and would deliver them through planning and control (Tien 1980, pp.11–12). Thus it was reasonable to act as “good comrades” and follow the leadership of the party. The heavily coloured political propaganda echoed Mao’s claim that he preferred persuasion to coercion.

This thesis argues that the birth control propaganda was a test to examine to what extent the Communists could manufacture a revolution of norms and ideas for the sake of the party's control of its people. The fruit of the propaganda took time to grow as the change in birth norms and the implementation of all family limitation practices, for example norms of small family, late marriage and childbearing, and effectiveness of contraception and sterilisation, needed to be reviewed over a certain period of time to measure the long-term effects in stage 3 of the politicisation.

#### *4.3.2 The Cultural Revolution and the Disruption of Birth Control Propaganda*

Before the CCP could harvest the results, there was another political upheaval, the Cultural Revolution, instigated by Mao to re-assert his authority in the party. The reason that Mao started the Cultural Revolution was similar to the reason for the so-called Leap Forward: Mao's power of Mao was somewhat restricted among other top officials after the terrible failure of the “Leap Forward”. The disaster of the great Chinese famine had been

a huge let-down for the top party officials, and they were convinced that Marxism could not work for the PRC, which led Mao to plan for another political struggle to regain control.

Mao mobilised the young generation in the rural areas to become “red guards” and march to Peking to “see Chairman Mao” under the banner of “revolution” (JEC 1972, pp.303–304). Mao was in the unusual position of being condemned and discredited by his own party yet retaining the unshakable faith of wider society. The superior status that Mao had was due to the image portrayed by the propaganda - that Mao was the ideological leader and the guide of the people, whereas the administrative system was actually run by Liu, making it somewhat difficult for Mao to dominate the running of the regime. Kraus noticed this divergence and pointed out that instead of making it a conflict among the elites, Mao turned to the people’s side and denounced the party, making himself the representative and the symbol of the people and “rekindling the fire of revolution” (Kraus 2012, p.9).

The Cultural Revolution was viewed as an extension or a culmination of the socialist education movement, so young people started to act like Mao and embrace his “revolutionary path” for their own (political) interests. The idea of being loyal to Mao replaced the relationships in the traditional Chinese hierarchy, so “the emperor is emperor and the minister is minister; when the father is father and the son is son” (君君，臣臣，父父，子子) gave way to “Father is dear, mother is dear, but not as dear as Chairman Mao” (爹親娘親不及毛主席親). Nonetheless, there was clearly a vacuum in this fascination with Mao as the ideology lacked the consistent and concrete stance needed to dictate the Chinese behaviour in various matters like birth control.

During the rampage of red guards, in which political leaders like Liu were taken down, the birth control propaganda was also affected as there was political confusion over which side should be followed. The land of China was left in chaos, as the foundations of traditional Chinese culture and relationships were taken out and replaced by nothing but the pursuit of power (for Mao and his followers) at all costs, giving rise to the extreme pragmatism that dictates the party state’s behaviour even in the 21st century.

As long as there was no legitimate way to stop the red guards (not even Mao could stop them as there was no ideological mandate to stop them from having a “revolution” for the class conflicts), the young Maoists reached a point where they could interpret Maoism (the only truth) as allowing them to do whatever they wanted. As for the birth control campaign, it didn't just quickly lose its priority. People took exactly the opposite path: it became the norm among these young Chinese to get married early, which contradicted the previous teaching of Mao, leading to “anarchy on reproduction” in the party state. The youth refused to listen to any order from anyone, even what was presented as the teaching of Mao. Seemingly, they realised deep down that everything was a leverage to power and they believed they were true followers of Mao by acting in such a manner.

The beginning of the end of the Cultural Revolution was in 1969 when Mao announced it was time for these anarchists to go back to the rural areas and take on their responsibilities, yet these young people persisted in carrying out the “dictatorship of the proletariat” and “smash all rules and regulation”. With the help of military involvement, the red guards were transported back to the rural areas but the changing mentality and rejection of “rule and regulation” among the new generation of the PRC had an enormous effect on the behaviour of the contemporary Chinese, making it extremely pragmatist and materialist in the absence of traditional and ancient cultural norms and social structure to guide their behaviours. The vacuum in mental checks and balances favoured the subsequent politicisation and securitisation. People followed no one but Mao, seeing him as the only guide to action, allowing a revolution in family beliefs and values and making them receptive to the idea of having fewer children when Mao promoted the family limitation campaign in an explicit manner. The weight of Mao's significance as the only guide to the Chinese was emphasised in the third stage of transformation of the ideological and ideational relationship between security and population dynamics.

#### *4.4 Stage 3: The Significant Influence of Mao on promoting Birth Planning*

At the peak of Mao's influence on all aspects of Chinese everyday life, the phrases of Mao were being widely circulated by the propaganda agencies in order to promote birth

control after the Cultural Revolution. The endorsement of Mao clearly revealed the “right” way to act in the party state, which dictated the transformation of norms and practices on family planning (JEC 1972, p.311). When the Office of Population Research of the Peking College of Economics reviewed the control of population growth in the third stage of propaganda, it began with the line ‘Socialist nations differ in their historical, political, and economic circumstances’ (Tien 1980, p.21), which recognised that the party had changed their discursive construction over population dynamics, claiming it was a bane rather than a boon. By identifying that demographic-related problems arose in a distinctive way in the Chinese social context, it suggested in a subtle way that Marxism could not entirely be applicable in its society, while at the same time it distinguished itself from the Malthusian perspective of universal population problems. The CCP relied less on Marxism, emphasising Maoism as the mandate to justify the propaganda.

As the CCP was now saying that the same problem should be handled in a different way based on their historical, political and economic circumstances rather than adopting a western approach in dealing with birth control, the discussion came back to the question of how to separate birth control policy from Malthus’s principle of population, i.e. western “bourgeois” ideology and demography, and situate it well in the Communist society? It was an ideological question when Orthodox Marxism as a western ideology was proven to be impractical in the eastern one-party state. The propaganda tactic followed the political reality that Mao was the symbol and the guiding light to lead the way for the Chinese since he had all the power centralised on him after the Cultural Revolution.

The propaganda then went back to Mao’s speech in 1957 which mentioned the socialist way of birth planning. Mao claimed that human reproduction was no different from agricultural and industrial production, and it was anarchism if such reproduction was not planned by the socialist government (Mao 2003, p.970). But to ordinary people, it was their personal choice to decide how many children they would like to have. Nonetheless, the idea of Mao had moved this personal decision to a state perspective that required state resources to manage and plan it for the sake of the socialist country, publicising and politicising it but framing it as a matter of state planning, not a personal decision. This de-

humanises the birth issue, making it nothing more than “social production” by shifting the referent object from individuals to the Communist state, making human reproduction no different from primary and secondary production of consumption goods. Human beings in this sense were regarded merely as a means of production for the CCP, which therefore should be monitored to best fit the party’s interests.

In regard to such de-humanisation of the reproductive decision, Greenhalgh pointed out that the socialist planning of population growth broke down the issue into various quantitative figures, e.g. number of children and interval between births (Greenhalgh 2008: 46). As long as it was a matter of numbers and statistics, the individual and human attributes were not taken into account, and such a dehumanising mentality made a one, two or three child policy possible as the ethical context of giving birth had been taken away. The 4th Five year plan of the CCP included a population control target for the first time to echo the determination of the party state, and serve as the quantitative standard that the Chinese needed to follow in order to achieve the building of the great Communist state. This perspective was sustained when the head of the planning statistics department, Liu Zheng, was appointed to develop a Marxian theory of birth planning, which later became the book published as *Population Policy* in the PRC.

On the one hand, Mao’s full endorsement of birth control served as the moral and emotional side of persuasion, while on the other hand, the policy itself broke the birth control issue down into numbers and statistics that could be measured objectively without ethical questions. In both ways, the propaganda promoted the idea of population growth as (a source of) various threats to the party state, which legitimised the birth planning campaign and the state control of its people’s personal reproductive decision, i.e. a process of politicisation. It was a manufacturing of changing norms on birth and family planning by discursive framing, linking the demographic issue to national consumption rates and creating discourses to pressure the Chinese to act “responsibly” for the economic development of the socialist state (Tien 1980, p.11). Premier Chou told the public that ‘birth planning is a (part of) national planning. It is not simply a health issue, but an issue of planning. If you are incapable of planning population, how can we plan our nation?’

(Xin 2009, p.14). His words followed the party rhetoric and marked the first countrywide birth planning campaign in the PRC in 1970.

In the same year, there was, in fact, a very interesting conversation when Snow interviewed Mao again and claimed that there had been a “great change” in regard to the Chinese attitude towards birth control (JEC 1972, p.314). Mao said Snow was obviously being influenced by the CCP propaganda, which might hinder him from recognising the real situation in the PRC, especially in the rural areas. Mao pointed out that there was still strong son preference in the countryside, and that women would give birth in their 40s because the family wanted extra labour. ‘This attitude must be changed’, Mao added, ‘but it takes time’ (ibid). He also highlighted that he would not tolerate coercive means and preferred using persuasion through propaganda to achieve his plans to create new laws to restrict population growth. The socialist approach to population control was repeatedly advertised thus:

Population increase in a planned way is the PRC’s established policy. We follow such a policy not because the question of “overpopulation” exists in the PRC. In the PRC, social production is carried out in a planned way and this requires that the population increase is planned, too. It is also necessary to have a planned population increase in order to promote the thorough emancipation of women, care for mothers and women and children and bring up and educate the younger generation well, and improve the people’s health and bring national prosperity. Such a policy conforms to the interests and aspirations the broad masses (Chi 1973, p.17).

The propaganda after the Cultural Revolution signified that population growth was politicised by the rhetorical distinction to contrast the CCP’s birth planning with the western approach. Therefore, even though from western perspective it is difficult to understand how the entire country being instructed in how to make a “correct” personal reproductive decision would “emancipate” women, they did frame it terms of socialist

planning in the Chinese cultural, political and economic context, which made sense to their own people. Such rhetorical tactics are also widely adopted in contemporary Chinese political discourse, for examples “socialism with Chinese characteristics” and the way they characterise human rights violations as “internal affairs” connected with various economic and security issues.

#### *4.5 The Political Communication on Politicisation/Securitisation in the PRC*

The politicisation of population growth in the PRC was not simply a top-down rhetorical construction as besides the speeches of top officials there were other corresponding discourses generated by actors at different levels to construct the politically correct way to approach the political issue of population dynamics. After stage 2 of the politicisation, the propaganda followed the extended explanation of Marxism, continuously making discursive connections between population growth and national planning. There were posters displayed in public areas and workplaces with typical short Communist slogans such as ‘carry out family planning, implement the basic national policy’, ‘do a good job in family planning to promote economic development’, ‘practising late marriage for revolution’ and ‘Changing cultural practice and starting family planning, both the nation and the families will gain prosperity’ (see figure 5 next page).

Birth planning was politicised by various actors at different levels in the Communist state with the message that birth control was a necessary act for the prosperity of the PRC. The rhetorical construction had taken the issue from a personal interest level to a state interest level and the Chinese across different levels (re)created norms and social pressure to (re)construct and enforce family limitation accordingly.

When Chow reviewed the legal system of the PRC, he pointed out that there was a ‘unit’ system, adopted by the CCP in 1949 when the party state was founded, which acted as an extension of the Communist control over the Chinese at various levels (Chow 2015, pp.83–84). These units existed to manage the administration and social issues in the workplace including food distribution, health care provision, employment, housing,



marriage and birth control. A hierarchy was established in these official social control agencies so that, as Chow pointed out, the top official could transmit power from the top to the bottom units.

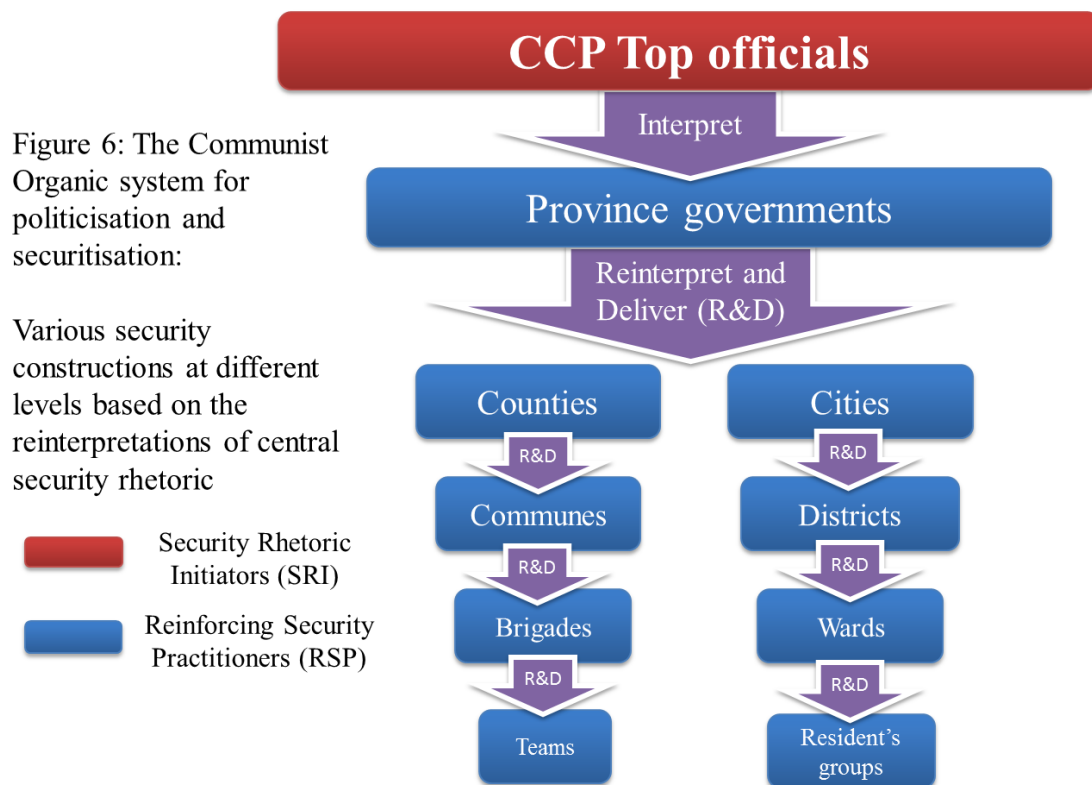


Figure 5: Posters of Family Planning in the PRC

In the case of birth control, the factory units answered to the call of the local birth committee who set the propaganda agenda for the local area. Then there were provincial governments which supervised the “performance” of the local units in order to make sure things went “according to plan”, i.e. followed the rhetorical security direction put out by the party officials discursively (see figure 6). Grasso raised the point that in the Communist system as it was, the Chinese were mostly likely working in the same unit for their entire life (Grasso *et al.* 2015, p.225). Lu and Perry put it, without labour mobility, the unit became the allocator of social services and welfare, so it had real power to regulate the

behaviour of the Chinese workers, including in important matters such as reproductive decisions (Perry and Lu 2015).

When the Chinese were assigned to a Communist working unit, which they would probably never be able to escape from, they did not have much choice but to behave well and follow what the unit told them. The unit had significant power to regulate the Chinese peasants' reproductive decisions in this setting since the unit decided the resource allocation of their workers. Nonetheless, the social control did not end with top-down direction and coercive means. There was pressure from the inside of the unit to enforce and reconstruct the necessity to stick to the propaganda at each level.



Peer pressure was generated by the tradition of collective punishment in Chinese society, which meant that everyone in the unit had to behave well and follow what the propaganda committee advertised (e.g. the posters in figure 5, and the structure in figure 6). The propaganda promoted the idea that it was the citizens' responsibility to accept birth planning to fit in with the planning of the Communist nation. The notion of birth planning as part of the national plan was a very strong mandate for the workers to put peer pressure

on anyone who wanted to break the norms, which would get everybody in the same unit into trouble. The rhetoric of birth planning was reconstructed under the peer pressure in a Communist unit exerted by the idea that “big brother is watching you” which was very similar to the Leninist approach to monitoring the workers. Nonetheless, when we put it in the context of rhetorical security construction, the referent object actually shifted back to the individual perspective in that everyone was worried that they would have to pay for others’ mistakes, and therefore created norms of monitoring each other in the name of national planning moral high ground.

The CCP pushed its population planning one step further after Mao admitted directly that ‘the population of the PRC is too large and people must control themselves so population can increase in a planned manner’ (Hu 2012, p.50). In the early 1970s, the Later, Longer, Fewer population policy was launched and there were recommendations made by the CCP to govern the precise number of children a family should have, i.e. 2 children maximum for urban families and 3-4 maximum for rural ones (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, pp.76, 81). It was again a de-humanised, quantitative method in respect to the matter of giving birth, and by making informal norms into explicit guidance it actually increased the pressure on agencies at different levels to enforce it strictly according to the numbers set out.

Provincial offices, city councils and local birth planning small leading groups worked together to identify (potential) norm-breakers and force their political rhetoric and Maoist theory of socialist birth planning upon the ones who refused to accept the politicisation of population growth, (re)generating a self-monitoring rhetorical structure across this nationwide network of the CCP security agencies. There were regular meetings, conferences, and reviews organised by these birth control propaganda organs to encourage the exchange of new ideas on practising socialist birth planning as a norm and obligation in both urban and rural areas.

The Later, Longer, Fewer policy was successful in that the fertility rate of the party state decreased from 4.98 in 1972 to 2.75 in 1979, which is a sharp reduction of 45% in

just seven years. A new norm began to develop among the Chinese which was originally initiated by Maoist birth planning, and later transformed into smaller family practices with the declining fertility rate of the PRC. The notion of having a small family became less a political ideology and more a matter of pragmatic politics, a practice that has to be followed for self-preservation in the Communist “big brother is watching you” environment. This resulted from the transformation from a Marxist to Maoist ideology and led to an ideational change of family norms and birth planning due to political necessity. The authoritarian system had finally tasted some success in forcing a revolution in personal values through press propaganda. After this victory, the CCP pressed on, launching an even more extreme population policy in 1979, which this dissertation regards as a securitisation of population dynamics, a stepping up of political control over the people in the name of dealing with demographic-related threats.

#### *4.6 The Stepping Up of Population Control: Introduction of the One-child policy*

This chapter has presented 3 stages of politicisation of population growth in the early rule of the PRC. The historical approach of reviewing prominent political incidents and struggles, combined with the discursive analysis of the CCP officials’ speeches, enables us to understand the initial ideological contradictions in stage 1, which rendered it powerless. In stage 2, various political struggles instigated by Mao, including the “Great Leap Forward” and the “Cultural Revolution”, as well as the process of the politicisation, threw the party state into turmoil. The catastrophic results, notably the great Chinese famine, forced the CCP to confront the incompatibility of Marxism on the matter of population growth, giving the CCP’s birth control an extended explanation by extreme pragmatic Maoism. After the ideological transformation of stage 2, Maoism’s influence altered the family practices of the Chinese in the final stage, which marked an ideational transformation of population growth. The CCP passed the test with flying colours with its ability to construct a new norm in Chinese society. Nonetheless, the twin issues of population growth and security did not disappear after the politicisation. On the contrary, there was a stepping up of population control through securitisation during the political transition from Mao to Deng.

When Deng, the new chairman of the CCP consultative conference, came to power and addressed the population issue, he summarised the basic national situation as a ‘large population, poor foundation, and limited arable land’, which was of strategic importance to the security of the Chinese people (Hu 2012, pp.50–51). In the second year after he became the top official of the PRC, he introduced the strictest ever population policy, i.e. the one-child policy, making it a nationwide program for the party state. The news struck a lot of people, especially frontline experts as an unnecessarily strict policy. Greenhalgh expressed her deep shock and spent decades exploring the reasons for having such an extreme and rigid population policy in her book *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng’s China* (Greenhalgh 2008). She greatly admired the Later, Longer, Fewer policy for its flexibility: it had room to adjust according to the real situation, especially in the rural areas. On the contrary, the black and white universal standard of the one-child policy not only accelerated population ageing and exacerbated the imbalanced sex ratio but also gave rise to a new set of demographic-related threats which He summarised as ‘ageing before rich, imbalanced sex ratio, diminishing Han majority’ (He 2008).

The next chapter of this dissertation examines the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC by the emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy. The main focus will be the speech acts and the discursive construction of the CCP to legitimise the introduction of such a coercive population policy. Besides answering the question of how such securitisation was achieved and prolonged for 36 years, it will seek to explain why the PRC adopted the one-child policy.

The last part of this chapter, a review of the historical and political background of the population policy, will provide some of the answers to this question in technical and political aspects prior to the in-depth discussion in chapter 5. As noted earlier in this chapter, there were only two nationwide population censuses between 1949 and 1964, so there was a lack of detailed demographic data for the CCP to understand the actual progress of the birth control. The CCP relied mainly on reports from the mid-level agencies about the growth of the population, which was a similar system to the crop reporting system in the

great Chinese famine period. The introduction of the one-child policy may have been partly because the party did not have the full picture of the demography of its people back then.

This dissertation views political reasons as the dominant factor for the adoption of the coercive policy. When Mao died in 1976, the PRC lost their guiding light and the coherence in standing together to achieve the same goal under the umbrella of Maoism. In order to find a replacement of this core value for stability and sustainability of the party state, Deng raised the idea of science and modernisation as the new path to make the PRC strong. Nonetheless, it was not easy to gain political support and legitimacy after the rule of Mao, especially as there were Maoism followers using Mao's old speeches from during the Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution to argue against the new policy.

Regarding the political situation in the party state, the Later, Longer, Fewer policy was deemed to be too weak as a political tool of control for the CCP due to the flexibility given to the Chinese to make their reproductive decision. Therefore, Deng needed to launch the coercive population policy to strengthen his control of individuals and boost the legitimacy of his rule. Chapter 5 introduces the idea of *de jure* securitisation, which refers to the legally binding extraordinary measures that took the power of decision-making away from the people. The *de jure* securitisation in 1979 is in contrast to the previous *de facto* politicisation, under which the Chinese still had room to make their own decisions despite the CCP propaganda. The one-child policy was a symbol of coercion of the rapidly rising PRC in the new era of Deng. The policy was coercive for political stability and development reasons.

The one-child policy was a product of politics which used fear and the obsession of “efficiency” of state planning to achieve a very high degree of state control by restricting the reproductive decisions of the Chinese. The one-child policy replaced the obsession of Maoism and became the new black and white rules on the board to follow in the Communist society. It served as an extreme version of the Later, Longer, Fewer policy, the product of *de facto* politicisation, replacing informal practices with rigid standards as a result of fear and coercion, a *de jure* securitisation. In a normal process of policy formation, it would

have passed through the stages of recognising the fear of an existential threat, then gathering a consensus and reacting by undertaking an emergency measure to tackle the fear of the security problem (fear → consensus → act). Nonetheless, the case of securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC did not work according to this pattern, and this process will be examined in the next chapter.

This chapter has reviewed how various demographic-related threats, e.g. anarchy in reproduction disrupting socialist planning, were drawn by the propaganda. After the political shift to the new rule of Deng, he started to use a coercive emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy, to reach a consensus on how the Chinese should react by restricting their birth (coercive act → fear → consensus). There was an ambitious target set by the 5th national people's congress to lower the annual population growth rate to less than 1% within 3 years (Folsom and Minan 1989, p.418), suggesting that the strict policy was designed to be brutal in order to achieve the consensus of accepting the control of the CCP. The strict and coercive birth control policy has immense symbolic meaning, revealing that the Communist state had the direct power to intervene in the personal decision of how many children a Chinese family could have.

All the propaganda work was the construction of fear about population growth and it legitimised the control of the party state over its people. Population dynamics was discursively constructed as an excuse for the CCP's control over its citizens. The constructions of values and beliefs, i.e. the propaganda, developed in favour of the control of the party state over its people, strengthened the legitimacy of Deng's government through the governmentality of unease towards population dynamics, and speeches of the leader(s) constitute the rhetorical construction (Qu 1987). Population dynamics became a catchword for any potential demographic-related threats and was securitised by the one-child policy to legitimise the CCP's control over the people.

Greenhalgh pointed out that efforts to stir up fear about population 'do not simply reflect a reality that exists in nature; instead, they may actively constitute a new reality by shaping what is thinkable in the domain of population' (Greenhalgh 2008, pp.10–11). The

idea raised by Greenhalgh was in line with the Copenhagen School's securitisation framework as what defines as security threats lies in the ideational understanding of the referent object, i.e. the Chinese people who faces various demographic-related threats, by using the linguistic construction of all the Communist propaganda agencies at different level to construct and reconstruct the appropriate response to the subject matter.

The next chapter will demonstrate how to distinguish the Communist approach to securitisation and will also argue that the opening up of the party state as well as the increasing adoption of capitalist practices in the country eroded the power of the Communist approach to keep securitising population growth for over 36 years. The reason that the PRC was able to lower the birth rate so quickly during the 1970s was not because of the practical policy but the rhetoric constructed by the propaganda that birth planning should be controlled as a matter of socialist national planning. The politicisation of population dynamics was a discursive construction against "anarchic reproduction", and, more importantly, an action in accordance with Maoist ideology. The pragmatic approach taken by Deng in making the Communist state act more like a capitalist state was revealed in his famous quote: "It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice" (黑貓白貓會抓老鼠的就是好貓), which signalled moving away from the Marxist and Maoist ideologies and replacing them with "science and modernisation". There is no doubt that the shift away from the Communist system diminished the power of politicisation and securitisation of population dynamics in the country, and the next chapter will review these changes to the constructions of security rhetoric over time.



## **Chapter 5 – From *de facto* Politicisation to *de jure* Securitisation: Securitising Population Dynamics and its politics in the PRC**

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In the last chapter, we examined the process of how the PRC politicised population growth and forced an ideational revolution in Chinese family norms. Such an ideological and ideational transformation was manufactured by the CCP leadership, intertwined with various political struggles that served particular political purposes. The idea that population growth should be regulated for the development of the socialist state was originated by top CCP officials (SRI), but the idea was reproduced and reinforced by various actors at different levels due to the very strong sense of checks and balance between its own people. The Chinese closely monitored each other to show loyalty to the party state as it was the best way to protect themselves. Scollon introduced the concept of discourse itineraries, and there are other studies that trace how these relevant discourses were transported and reconfigured subjected to different interpretations among numerous actors (Scollon 2008; Jones 2015; Jones and Li 2016). Chapter 4 argued that the CCP leaders fired the starting gun of politicising population growth, and this idea was reconstructed by the understanding of their fellow Chinese across different levels. Therefore, instead of viewing the Communist practice of politicisation as a top-down model, it would be more appropriate to regard it as an organism in which the brain, i.e. top officials as Security Rhetoric Initiators, signals a command of politicisation and the organs in the body, i.e. lower rank officials as Reinforcing Security Practitioners, actualise the politicisation in its own way (see chapter 4.1.5).

This chapter further investigates the unique model of securitisation implemented by the PRC – an Asian socialist state – in order to fill the gap of the insufficient research on non-euro centric securitisation. The securitisation of population growth in the PRC in regarding population growth as a threat to the party state, was a step up from politicisation but what was the threat construction process that legitimised the strictest population policy in human history? This research adopts both the Copenhagen school and the Paris school

approaches to analysis the case of the PRC. The former concerns questions including what the referent object was, who the main securitising actors were, and how the issue was securitised by speech acts (see Chapter 2.8 and Chapter 3.3). The latter examines the policy implementation of the emergency measures, e.g. how everyday security practices varied and the struggles of priority among actors at different levels. In addition to the examination of the security practices, the Paris School contributes to explaining why there were various practices at different levels through its relational approach and its examination of the politics of securitisation (see Chapter 2.8). This chapter focuses on the process of securitisation of population growth by the PRC and also reveals how it was intertwined with politics in the party state.

Despite the huge success of the politicisation of population growth, which had reduced the fertility rate from 4.98 in 1972 to 2.75 in 1979 (Tien 1980, pp.36–37), the CCP encountered the strongest resistance towards its new population policy in the late 1970s and in the 1980s. One might wonder why there was powerful opposition to the one-child policy when the socialist propaganda had done a very good job in shaping new family values and beliefs in Chinese society in the 70s. The answer to this question is three-fold. First, the death of Mao in 1976 led to a political vacuum: no-one could replace him at that particular moment as the figurehead of the socialist propaganda on birth control. His successor Deng inherited Mao's extreme pragmatism and later carried out various reforms to consolidate his power to control the party state. The one-child policy was one of these reforms.

Second, there is a significant difference between the Later, Longer, Fewer policy and the one-child policy. The former was a supplementary product of a newly constructed norm, which left some degree of personal freedom for the Chinese to make their own reproductive decisions, while the latter was a black-and-white command that everyone had to follow, i.e. a *de jure* securitisation, in place of a *de facto* politicisation. This chapter argues that the stepping up of the party's control over its people's reproductive decisions led to fierce confrontations especially in the early stages of the implementation.

Even though socialist propaganda utilised the same tactics as the politicisation of population growth to link the development and prosperity of the party state to fertility, and projected a great future with a controlled population growth, these connections were far weaker than the need for labour that rural Chinese families faced in their everyday lives. The clash heated up rapidly following the change from a *de facto* politicisation of population growth with a supplementary Later, Longer, Fewer policy to a *de jure* securitisation with a coercive one-child policy.

Third, the absence of charismatic leadership actually led to the stepping up of control to legitimise the rule of Deng in the post-Mao era. The politics of securitisation is one of the main focuses of this chapter, as, in many ways it reveals the governmentality of unease by the CCP. For example, the enforcement of the one-child policy became extremely strict every time the party state encountered political instability. The one-child policy thus should be regarded as a security technique of the governmentality of unease. Numerous demographers have expressed their doubts about why the PRC adopted such an unnecessary coercive population policy (e.g. Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985), and the answer lies in the political concerns of creating arrays of “straw man threats” to leave the people no choice but to rely on the party's strong-arm rule.

This chapter examines the securitisation of population growth and the introduction and early implementation of its emergency measure, the one-child policy. It argues that the PRC, as an Asian non-democratic socialist country, had its own interpretations of referent object, securitising actors and relevant audiences throughout the securitisation process. Some of these differences have already been presented in chapter 4 when discussing how the party state politicised population growth in 3 distinct stages. This chapter goes further and, using the Copenhagen School's framework, studies the construction of rhetoric for the initiation of the one-child policy. Besides investigating how population growth was securitised by linguistic devices in socialist propaganda, the chapter will examine the reasons for such securitisation, using the Paris School approach. Chapter 6 will study the transformation of policy implementation and review the inconsistency between the rhetoric construction and actual everyday security practices of the one-child policy. It will

demonstrate the practical and relational considerations and the struggles of priority between security practitioners, rhetoric initiators, and discontented audiences. Last but not least, we will examine the shift from securitising population growth with the one-child policy, to the securitisation of population decline in recent years.

The thesis attempts to contribute to enriching our understanding of how an Asian non-democratic state conducted securitisation with a socialist approach by examining the case of population dynamics in the PRC. Although one might argue that the case is not transferable, as there are limited numbers of socialist states in the world, the linguistic techniques of threat construction, especially the leverage of population dynamics to securitise an array of threats, can provide valuable insights for future securitisation to ease the pain of the threats to come.

### *5.1 Issue area and Sectors*

This chapter follows the approach of Caballero-Anthony *et al.* to examine securitisation in Asian countries (Caballero-Anthony *et al.* 2006; also see chapter 2.10). To start with, the thesis focuses on the issue area and sectors. It uses the case of the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC to demonstrate that that population dynamics can be leveraged by securitising actors to create various connections to different threats. Such an inclusive concept has the potential to encompass a large variety of security threats simply by politicising and securitising population dynamics.

For example, the CCP politicised population growth by connecting it to threats including women and children's health and education, economic development, food security and disruption of national planning (see chapter 4.6.2). Traditionally, the Copenhagen school approach aims to widen the definition of security beyond a limited military perspective by spreading its net across 4 sectors, i.e. economic, environmental, political and societal (Buzan *et al.* 1998). Despite the fact that Buzan *et al.* mentioned the syncretisation of different sectors (Buzan *et al.* 1998, Chapter 8), they did not provide

convincing justification of why it is necessary to break security down into various sectors and combine it afterwards.

In contrast, one can easily securitise threats across different sectors at once, which obviates the need for the sectoral approach. Moreover, using sectors to separate and restrict particular threats in specific sectors is, in fact, a pre-construction which and presumes the nature of these security issues before their characteristics are securitised by securitising actors. Therefore, this thesis does not opt for the sectoral approach. On top of the argument that the categorisation of sectors is a preconstruction which limits the creativity of securitising actors in drawing various issues together, it is also worth highlighting that every case study of securitisation actually serves the function of (re)shaping the “presentation of threats” to audiences, which feeds back into the threat construction the author's own subjective views. Therefore, one must be aware that securitisation is merely a (re)interpretation of the previously performed speech acts and established emergency measures, but still, it has a lasting effect, as it reinforces the existing threat construction. Both the sectoral approach and securitisation itself should thus be regarded as pre-construction and re-construction of a threat construction.

In the case of the PRC, population dynamics was discursively presented as a threat to the modernisation of the party state and in this way it was securitised by the CCP. There were 4 modernisation goals that Mao's successor, Deng, wanted to advocate in order to take the PRC from the third world to the first world. These modernisations encompassed agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology (Grasso *et al.* 2015). The detail of Deng's leadership of the Communist party, and his role as the architect of the array of demographic-related threats, will be discussed in the next section about securitising actors. Population dynamics, was leveraged by the party state to manufacture fear and this resulted in a securitisation which legitimated the use of extraordinary measures to control various aspects of people's lives. This led to a reinforcement of the totalitarian rule – ‘everything for the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state’ (Pipes 1995, p.243) – in which birth control was the solution created to combat various threats to the economic development of the Communist state. The Chinese were

persuaded by this economic appeal to obey the laws and regulations of birth planning created by the rhetorical construction of this *de jure* securitisation. Such political practices are common. As Arase pointed out, non-democratic countries usually rely on their economic performance to maintain their rule (Arase 2010, p.810).

The same tactic was adopted in various Asian countries which political economists called developmental states. An example can be found in Johnson's book *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925-1975*, which examines the secrets of Japan's rapid rise as a world power (Johnson 1982). He argues that the nation of the rising sun placed economic development as its first priority and that the country mobilised the whole nation's power and resources to concentrate on specific strategic industries. It was restated and emphasised that 'overcoming the depression required economic development, war preparation & warfighting required economic development, post-war reconstruction required economic development, independence from US aid required economic development...' (Johnson 1982, p.308). The only difference perhaps is that nearly all developmental countries, including Japan and other Asian miracle countries (Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan, except Singapore), have moved away from heavily centralised control over their political and economic systems. While the PRC claimed that population growth was a threat to modernisation and that therefore it needed to adopt an extraordinary strong-arm measure to tackle it, modernisation actually has its own effect of lowering population growth. It increases the cost of living and the cost of raising a child and it is one of the main reasons the birth rate in the late 70s was sharply reduced, especially in urban areas.

Consequently, the question arises: why did the CCP launch the one-child policy as an emergency measure if the late demographic transition was already under way since the 70s (Wang 2011, p.174), i.e. death rate and birth rate begins to decline. This is because securitising population dynamics makes it easier to securitise various threats. This thesis argues that it would be more effective if the main securitising actor could recognise the core that leads to such threats. Yet, many demographers do not believe that the PRC was facing a population crisis in the late 1970s that required urgent measures in the late 1970s.

This dissertation argues that the securitisation of population growth was merely a political move to enhance Deng's power and justify increased state control when he took over from Mao. The portrayal of a nation catching up with the first world through modernisation was, in fact, a distraction from the political instability and transition. It was the same tactic as when Barrington published his poem 'I want to be a consumer' (Barrington 1934, p.467), it was a projection of future dreams and a distraction from the current internal problems. Most importantly, it subscribed to the use of centralised extraordinary measures to realise these beautiful dreams.

Interestingly, it was not only the Chinese who were persuaded by visions of a prosperous future that the party state could tackle the threats from population explosion. Many western scholars (e.g. Madsen 1993) thought economic growth and modernisation would eventually lead to social, cultural and political modernisation. The logic behind this optimism about the development of a civilised and democratised China can be traced back to Aristotle's emphasis on the importance of the middle class, and the belief that the increasing numbers of the middle class could democratise the nation. Regrettably all these good hopes were shut down by the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. Witnessing the PRC's economic growth in the past decades, one can see that securitising anything that could threaten the party state's top priority – economic development – remains a fundamental policy for the continuation of the Chinese socialists' rule. Therefore, investigating how population dynamics to be securitised not only shed light on how an Asian Communist state carried out a successful securitisation in its unique way, but also examining the political reasons of having these threats securitised.

## *5.2 Deng and the CCP top officials as the Security Rhetoric Initiators*

Following the framework of Caballero-Anthony *et al.*, this section will examine the securitising actors in the case of the PRC. As discussed in chapter 4, this thesis argues that socialist countries like the PRC have a unique mechanism to rhetorically politicise and securitise an issue. Therefore, instead of the traditional Copenhagen School concept that there would be a few powerful securitising actors to facilitate the threat construction, the

thesis introduces the concepts of Security Rhetoric Initiators (SRI), self-reinforcing practitioners (SRP) and Discontented Relevant Audiences (DRA) as constituting a giant securitising organism (see chapter 4.1.5). In this section, we will start with the concept of SRIs who are the top officials of the party state.

There is no doubt that that party state underwent various radical changes in nearly all aspects of state management after Mao's death. The passing away of the Chinese socialist chairman who had led the party since the CCP government was formed resulted in a political and ideological vacuum as the PRC lost its figurehead around which to unify its people with its socialist propaganda. In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution the most fundamental essence of Chinese traditions, structure, manners, norms, and religious practices had been taken away leaving only pragmatism (see Chapter 4). Although Mao's successor, Deng, had served the CCP since the 1925 revolution and had been through the Long March, the Japanese invasion in the WWII and even led the anti-rightist movement for Chairman Mao (Deng 1957), he was denounced three times during the period of Cultural Revolution, which put him at a disadvantage when it came to who would be the next leader to rule the country. In addition, he did not have a chance to shine when the "red sun" Mao was alive. In order to build up the legitimacy of his rule, he portrayed himself as the new political leader who would adopt a western model of modernisation and bring prosperity to the party state. When he came to power he expressed his views on market reform and opening up some Chinese coastal cities as special economic zones for international trade. 'We should let some people get rich first, both in the countryside and in the urban areas' is how Deng stated his belief in the trickle-down effect, which is not consistent with socialist ideology (Shawki 1997).

While some would claim Deng was the one who turned the socialist state into a capitalist one, this thesis argues that Deng continued Mao's extreme pragmatism: he would adopt any policy as long as it helped to keep his party in power. This chapter will demonstrate how the one-child policy was leveraged as a means of control over the Chinese in order to sustain the rule of the CCP. "It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice" (黑貓白貓會抓老鼠的就是好貓), said Deng. His reform



inherited Maoist pragmatism from the Cultural Revolution and it has had a profound influence on the development of the party state in 4 main areas including agriculture, industry, national defence and science & technology (Grasso *et al.* 2015, pp.219–220). Grasso and his colleagues listed the contradictions between Mao's and Deng's policies including that the former promoted ideological leadership while the latter promoted economic leadership, which led to different corresponding policies such as self-sufficiency versus opening up trade, and “red” (the CCP government) versus “expert” (scholars and demographers). Particularly, the one-child population policy would be this “red” versus “expert” situation that Deng learned the solution from the failure of the great famine and the Cultural Revolution, he realised the importance of getting demographers on board to bring scientific knowledge into the formulation population policy (Greenhalgh 2008). Reliable statistics gave the new government, as security initiators, a solid basis from which to construct a rhetoric about the root of various threats, i.e. population growth, and thus to securitise everything by having a strict population policy.

Not only did the strictest ever population policy serve as a lever to increase the government's control of its people over their reproductive decisions, but also by increased coercive means to enforce it and single out the disobedient Chinese who dare to disagree. Such a radical way to achieve a particular political purpose is no different from the extreme Maoist pragmatism during the Cultural Revolution. Maoism forged its own explanation to include birth planning within socialist planning, while what Deng did was use science to leverage his strong population policy in his early rule. Each in his own way was refuting Marxism's strong opposition to birth control, but each had their own rhetoric to justify their actions.

With Deng's pragmatism in adopting science, technology, trade and market mechanism as the means of modernising the PRC, he maintained 4 cardinal principles to preserve the essence of the Communist state. These were 1) the principle of upholding the socialist path, 2) the principle of upholding the people's democratic dictatorship, 3) the principle of upholding the leadership of the CCP and 4) the principle of upholding Maoism and Marxism-Leninism (Kane 2001, pp.48, 50). This is a combination that ensured the

CCP's legitimacy as a socialist state which adopted western technology and a capitalist market mechanism, which Deng called a "socialist state with Chinese characteristics". Deng once expressed his grief about the compromise he made by introducing a capitalist mechanism to sustain the economy, as 'when I die they will not call me a good Marxist' (Shawki 1997). Although he might not have been a Marxist, or even followed Mao's policies, he got Maoist pragmatism well enough to use population growth and the one-child policy in a strong and coercive absolute manner, then start to convince people in a relatively soft way such as using education and positive incentives. This section highlights the pragmatist approach of the major security rhetoric initiators, i.e. Deng and the top CCP officials, which will be useful when the latter section of this chapter uses population data to prove that the one-child policy was leveraged to sustain CCP rule in the party state.

### *5.3 The Securitisation of Population Growth and the PRC as a Securitising Organism*

When Deng established the modernisation era after Mao, the emphasis on science became the main driver to persuade the Chinese that modernisation represented the coming prosperity of the party state. Deng's notion of science continued Mao's pragmatism as the means to achieve the same end: the development of the socialist state. The securitisation of population growth was achieved by a security rhetoric constructed by Deng and other CCP officials, i.e. security rhetoric initiators, to tackle the demographic-related problems that hindered modernisation. While reviewing the language used in securitising population growth, Greenhalgh identified the adoption of scientific discourse and reasoning when the party was trying to promote its one-child policy (Greenhalgh 2008, p.193). The demographers were scholars who had survived the anti-rightist movement and the Cultural Revolution, and the CCP brought them back to the table to wrap their policy in scientific reasoning. 'China's leaders ensured not only that the science of population would be eminently political – that is, that population science making would be aimed at claiming the policy prize, shaped by political forces, and intensely contested' she added (Greenhalgh 2008, p.194). The leverage of population science was a pragmatic move towards the political aim of securitising population dynamics.

This section focuses on the security concept and referent object set out by the CCP, which inherited the pragmatic, collective and coercive characteristics of the authoritarian state. The securitisation and its emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy, were planned in 1978. The decision on the implementation was made by the CCP before the strict policy was publicised to the Chinese public in 1979 (Banister 1984). According to Chen and Chen, the massive social engineering experiment was first mentioned by Premier Hua in the National People's Congress (NPC) (Chen and Chen 1979, p.349). Unlike the Chairman of the CCP, who determines the overall ideological and strategic direction, as with Deng's 4 modernisations, the Premier of the party state is the head of the State Council that oversees the administrative system to ensure the actual practices go well. The burden of educating and persuading the Chinese to have one-child families, therefore, fell on the State Council's shoulders. Vice Premier Chen Muhua was the top CCP official who wrote most extensively to justify the introduction of the one-child policy.

Chen presented the urgent need to securitise population growth with scientific justifications that the PRC's economic development was under existential threat. Immediately after the one-child policy was announced in June, Chen wrote an article entitled *China set ever more stringent target for fertility reduction* to explain the economic threat faced by its population growth (Chen 1979a, p.725). She claimed that the party state barely had any capital accumulation due to the surging cost of raising the millions of new-borns, saying that approximately 1 trillion yuan had been spent on their new generation in just 3 decades. Such high costs had also led to a limited budget for education, which hindered the process of turning young dependent "consumers" into mature "producers" for the economic development of the socialist state (Chen 1979a, p.728). Chen also used the calculation of GDP per capita to demonstrate how average living standards were eroded by the population boom because there were more people sharing the same pie. It is clear that the propaganda for the one-child policy relied on the discourse of presenting economic calculations. Statistics and numbers were cited frequently in the threat construction of population growth. Scientific language had an important role in drawing the connection between skyrocketing population and economic development, and suggested the latter was facing an existential threat. The construction of security rhetoric revealed the determination

of the CCP to boost the economy in a short period of time, and they would use any measure to clear the obstacle of modernisation and economic development, even limiting people's freedom over reproductive decisions.

Below is an example of this propaganda with scientific discourse, related to the goal setting of the one-child policy. Qian, minister of public health, cited statistics as the foundation to justify the implementation of the one-child policy:

Every year in China some 10 million couples of young men and women will reach marriageable age and they will marry and have children. At the existing rate of population growth, China will have a population of 1,300 million by the end of the century. If the population is to grow to such a size, we will be compelled to devote a considerable amount of our financial and material resources to feeding the newly increased populace. That will inevitably slow down the four modernisations. We plan to lower the country's natural rate of population growth to around 5 per 1,000 by 1985... This means that on the average each couple as of now can have only one child (Banister 1984, pp.721–722).

Vice Premier Chen also expressed her worry based on the population data that a large cohort of the generation born during Mao's baby boom was entering their reproductive years in 1979, which created an urgent need to have population growth controlled, with a strictly planned birth rate ensured by the one-child policy (see figure 7 below).

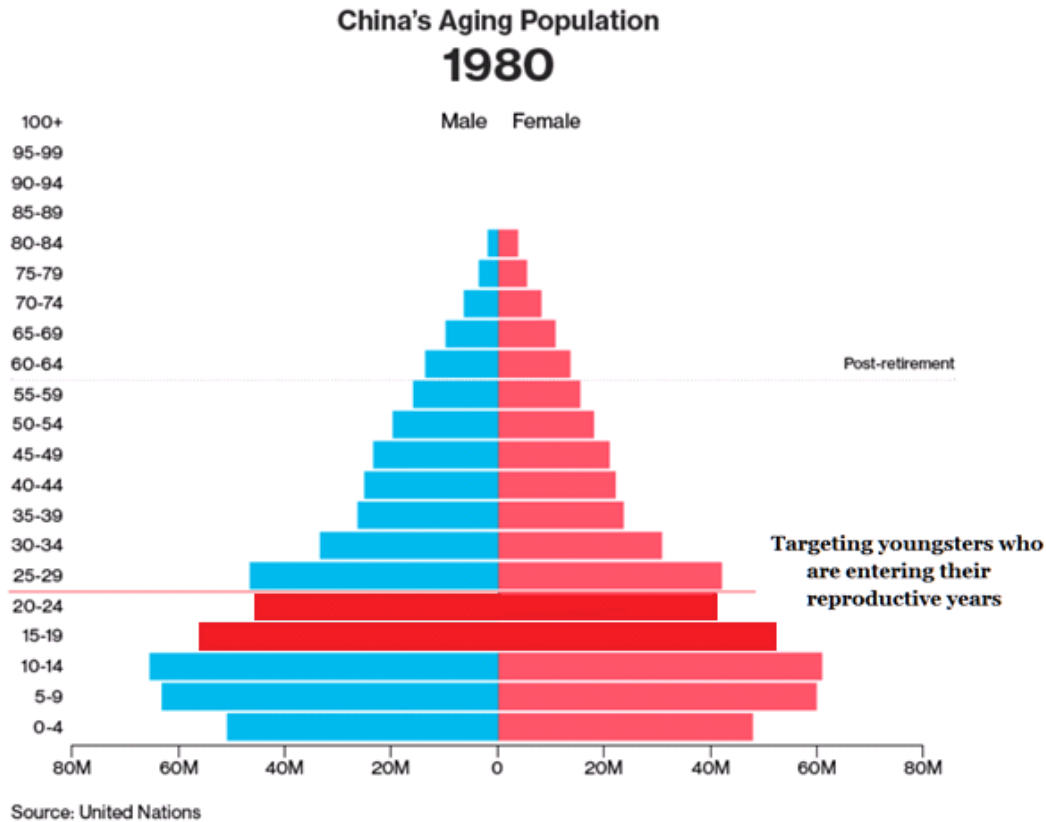


Figure 7. The target of the one-child policy (UN 2011, emphasis in original)

Compared with previous speeches during politicisation, the propaganda had clearly become more precise, with scientific predictions employed to legitimise the introduction of the one-child policy. Even with all those statistics, there is no negative material relationship shown between population growth and economic development or modernisation in the case of Chinese society. On the contrary, there is research revealing a positive material relationship: that the higher the modernisation rate, the higher the rate of reduction in birth rate. For example, Ali found a positive relationship between agricultural modernisation and birth rate reduction, especially when the benefits of farming improvements are equally distributed (Ali 1981).

In the case of the PRC, when the 4 modernisations were promoted along with the one-child policy, it is difficult to determine to which particular policy the reducing birth rate was actually attributable, especially when the birth rate was already quite low, at a

replacement level of 2.2 children per women in the late 70s. In fact, Grasso and his team pointed out that grain production increased by 4% per year in the late 70s, which transformed the party state from a food importer to a net exporter (Grasso *et al.* 2015, p.220). This casts doubt on the claim by the CCP that the Chinese would suffer hunger due to the increase in population would hinder modernisation. Therefore, there was no material evidence in the propaganda that convinced the Chinese that population growth had to be securitised; it was simply the scientific rhetoric that the party state adopted to persuade people of the need the one-child policy as an emergency measure.

Nonetheless, Chen also pointed out that even though the birth rate had been significantly reduced in the 1970s, the rural population, which accounted for 80% of total population, still had a higher potential growth rate than the urban population (P. Chen 1980, p.70). Even though Western demography uses demographic transition to highlight the possibility of reducing future population growth by modernisation and other factors such as rising cost of living, the effect would be mostly in urban areas, which accounted for only 20% of the population. When this factor was combined with the data that the baby boomers from Mao's era were entering their reproductive years, it was deemed to be a very strong and convincing justification for the carrying out of the emergency measure.

Despite that fact that a material relationship between population explosion and the 4 modernisations was hard to determine, it was the ideational relationship, as Buzan called the manner of putting it that made it a security issue (Buzan *et al.* 1998). Bongaarts and Greenhalgh summarised the one-child policy as 'the outcome of a series of calculations about presumed relations between macro-demographic and macroeconomic growth' (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985, p.594). The ideational connections were drawn by Chen thus: 'For the realisation of the four modernisations, there must be planned control of population growth' (Chen 1979b). The Vice Premier further established this ideational relationship in this passage:

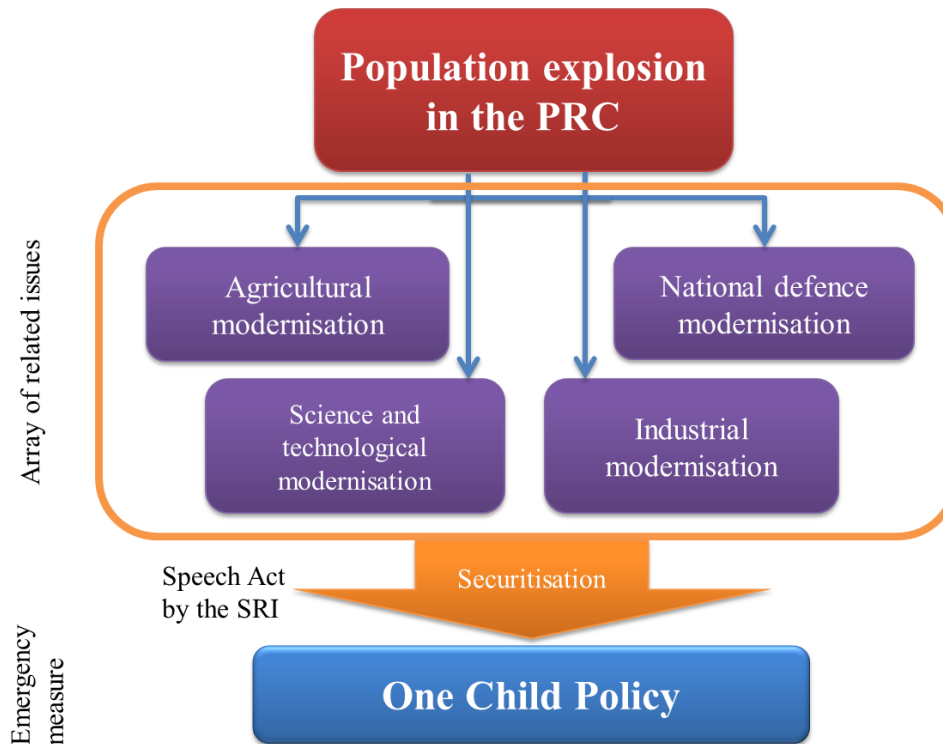
We must squarely face the fact that rapid population increase obstructs economic development. Under current conditions in our country, the

question of whether or not to control population increase is not merely a question of whether to have fewer or more babies; it is a strategic question that bears on the development of our country's productive forces, on the realisation of the four modernisation and on the transition from socialist construction to communism (Chen and Chen 1979, p.350).

Wong pointed out that in the speeches of the Chinese top officials there was a sense of urgency when the CCP presented the need to have the one-child policy as the solution to the threat posed by unplanned population growth (Wong 1984, p.222). This strong language of urgency was also associated with wordings like "eliminate" high order births and "multiple births must be wiped out" to reveal and project it as high politics or what the CCP called "basic national policy" (Anon 1977, p.284). There was an ultimate goal set by the party state to achieve zero population growth, i.e. zero natural increase, by the end of the century (Chen 1979b; Chen and Chen 1979).

But how such goal was determined and what factors were considered in arriving at such a target were never explained by the CCP. As it is generally known that natural growth rate of population equals crude birth rate minus crude death rate, and there is obviously no way to strictly control death rate, the most rational way to control growth was to go after birth rate. There were two stages to reach this target. Premier Hua announced that the party wanted to lower the natural growth rate from 12 per 1000 to 5 per thousand by 1985, and to zero by the end of 2000 (Chen and Chen 1979, p.351). According to the data presented by party officials, third and higher order births accounted for about 30% of total births. The party demonstrated the calculation that if no more families had a third child, the natural increase rate would drop to 7 per thousand, which was short of to the target for 1985 (Chen and Chen 1979, p.352). The rationale for the Communist party was that if they also get rid of second parity births, the party state could achieve the goal of reducing the natural increase rate to 5% by 1985 (Chen 1979a, p.726), and that was the reason why this new population policy was a one-child policy: it was a policy born under a reverse calculation to achieve the objective set by the party state.

Figure 8: Securitisation of Population Growth in the PRC



Chen wrote that the one-child policy as an emergency measure in ‘controlling excessive population growth via a well-run planned-birth program will vastly reduce the population pressure on employment, facilitate the accumulation of capital on the part of the state and the collective, and improve the people’s standard of living... in short, controlling the increase in population is a major task of strategic significance’ (Chen and Chen 1979, p.354; also see figure 8). It was presented as a demographic emergency measure that should not normally be permanent practice, as the securitisation framework regarded security as a negative thing that needed to be tackled in a short period of time - a life-and-death matter. Wong expressed a similar point of view: that it should be a ‘temporary stringent measure’ to deal with the consequences of the population boom that had occurred during Mao’s era (Wong 1984, p.226).

Yet, apparently the CCP did claim that the energetic Planned Birth Unit should be regarded as a long-term unit to regulate population growth for the party state (Chen and Chen 1979, p.353) It eventually oversaw the policy for 36 years and remains in place to



deal with population decline. The reasons for such a prolonged propaganda campaign and the carrying out of emergency measures will be discussed later in section 5.3.5 about the politics of initiating this securitisation of population growth. The general argument of this section can be simply delivered by the adoption of Jowett and O'Donnell's definition of propaganda, i.e. 'the use of propaganda emphasises *purpose*, 'the term is associated with *control* and is regarded as a deliberate attempt to alter or maintain a balance of power that is advantageous to the propagandist' (Jowett and O'Donnell 2011, pp.6–7). The later section 5.3.5 adopts the Paris School approach to look at the governmentality of unease and the politics of securitisation [or what Greenhalgh called 'micro-politics of science making and policymaking' (Greenhalgh 2008, p.9)] and argues that the implementation of the strict population policy not only symbolised the CCP's direct control of its people but also a series of political calculations of control to keep the single party in power.

Further to the referent objects that the CCP had in mind, i.e. modernisation and economic development, it was the continuing discourse of bringing prosperity for the development of the socialist state. Mao emphasised socialist planning and forged his own way to politicise population growth by including birth planning in national planning. In Deng's era, modernisation was the means to lead the third world state to catch up with the first world, and it was framed as being existentially threatened by population growth: 'We will try to attain the goal that 95 percent of married couples in the cities and 90 percent in the countryside will have only one child in due course, so as to ensure greater and faster economic development in the country and an obvious improvement of the people's living standard, and to raise the cultural level of the Chinese nation' (M. Chen 1980).

To the CCP, it was a rational choice to introduce its extraordinary measure, i.e. the one-child policy, to secure the economic development of the socialist state. It inherited Maoist pragmatism in a different form, i.e. it was more an economic and practical kind than an ideological kind. It was the grand picture of the promised economic growth that persuaded people to submit to the population control, and even capitalist policies like the special economic zones. The PRC certainly did not need the one-child policy. As the party newspaper recognised, the population growth rate had dropped by half, proving that the

Later, Longer, Fewer policy had been very effective. The reason for advocating an even stronger population policy was to prevent any adverse effect on socialist modernisation (Chen 1979b). As Banister put it, 'by 1978 China's leaders realised that the people had all along been responding to economic signals' (Banister 1984, p.712). The Maoist pragmatism was deeply rooted in the minds of the Chinese people, and that mentality was leveraged by the discursive construction that population growth posed an existential threat to modernisation and economic development. Material and cultural well-being were linked to population growth in the party's newspaper People's Daily, which carried the message that rapid population growth inevitably produces unfavourable results (People's Daily 1979).

This section ends with the security concept in securitisation, which Caballero-Anthony and her colleagues define as 'whose security is under threat' (Caballero-Anthony *et al.* 2006, p.7). As the notion of the existential threats to economic development was presented by the Communist propaganda, the relevant object, according to the vice premier, was the *collective of the socialist state*, not the people:

Birth planning represents the fundamental interest of the state and the people as a whole, and naturally, it also corresponds to the interest of the individuals. If there were a conflict between the interests of the state and collective, the individual should self-consciously subordinate his own interest to that of the state and the collective (Chen 1979a, p.729).

These are fundamental interests of the state and the whole people; they are also consistent with the interests of individuals. To the extent that the interests of individuals come into conflict with those of the state and the collective, the former should voluntarily be subordinated to the latter (Chen and Chen 1979, p.354).

This is the same rationale as the politicisation of population growth, which was that the socialist state was being threatened, and therefore the people had the responsibility to

adjust their behaviour for the sake of the state. It is a typical maxim of totalitarian rule that says ‘everything for the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state’ (Applebaum 2012, p.xxiv). Being a totalitarian state, the PRC was used to relying on the official ideology, from communism to Maoism, to politicise population growth and other aspects of its people’s daily life for absolute control. The ideological orientation dictated the way of life and had huge influences on personal reproductive decisions, and planned birth was enforced by having planned birth subcommittees at each level of administration and workgroups in both rural and urban areas (Chen and Miller 1975). The check and balance system among the individuals themselves was established as there was massive employment of these CCP representatives not only to emphasise the Communist supervision but also to exercise the real power to reward and punish ordinary people according to their reproductive decisions. Thus, in such an atmosphere of “big brother is watching you”, there was very little room for individuals to choose how many offspring they would like to have. As Chen and Miller put it, ‘China’s planned birth organisational arrangements are integrated in a thoroughly political, economic and social restructuring of society’ (Chen and Miller 1975, p.361).

One typical expression of the importance of such birth planning “education” is the statement by Vice Premier Chen that the CCP had to ‘strengthen propaganda and education... liberate our thought and freely foster a public opinion in favour of controlling population increase’ (Chen and Chen 1979, p.352). Even if anyone thought they could evade the repressive policing of the CCP, the micro-monitoring system made it almost impossible for them to escape their peers’ attention and not get reported for an unauthorised birth. This is a tactic that the Chinese called ‘regulating the masses by turning them against each other’ (群眾鬥群眾), and is a self-correcting and reinforcing system which has made birth planning successful since the 1970s. It is noted that this policing system extends not only to birth planning but other aspects of society such as the later rule that there must be a parallel CCP committee to oversee local elected representatives in a dual governing system (Lieberthal *et al.* 2014, p.371).

Although when Deng came to power the socialist state moved towards a more capitalist system which permitted a certain level of personal freedom and limited existence of civil society, the one-child policy was a policy to take back some control by shifting from a *de facto* politicisation to a *de jure* securitisation. The Later, Longer, Fewer policy was a supplementary population policy which supported and facilitated the willing transition to a preference for small families, in which the power of decision making to a certain extent still remained in the people's hands, i.e. a *de facto* politicisation of population growth. But the implementation of the one-child policy, which severely constrained the Chinese to have just one child, removed the power from the people's hands and kept it in the hands of the CCP, in order to increase their control.

#### 5.4 The Process of Securitisation: The Speeches, Coercion, and Self-Reinforcing Actors

This section covers the initiation of the securitisation and the first couple years of the implementation of the one-child policy in order to identify and examine the political purpose of the securitisation for the CCP. This section will identify the process of securitisation and the politics of having such a rapid escalation in the early stages of the enforcement the one-child policy. At first, the one-child policy was not a black and white legally binding policy that compelled all Chinese to have only one child. Before the escalation of the policy to a *de jure* securitisation with coercive enforcement of the one-child policy, it went through a transitional period during which it was a supplementary policy to encourage people to have fewer children. According to Hardee-Cleaveland and Banister, the CCP claimed that 'the policy is carried out through *voluntarism with state guidance*' (Hardee-Cleaveland and Banister 1988, p.iii). The *de facto* nature of the early implementation of the policy is revealed not only by this voluntarism but also by a series of economic incentives, both positive and negative, to foster the achievement of zero population growth by the end of 2000.

In the very first public speeches of Vice Premier Chen, she framed the "population problems" faced by the socialist state in macroeconomic terms (Chen 1979a, p.723). This signifies that the social side-effects had not been taken into account by the CCP.

Greenhalgh outlined the argument that the socialist state did not regard the study of population as social science, as that might contradict the Marxian teaching in social science (Greenhalgh 2008, pp.24–29), which to a certain extent answers the question of why the CCP carried out such a strict population policy: it was an economic policy dressed in demographic clothes, but not a policy dealing with social problems. The social aspect of it had been marginalised and the political aspect of it can be explained in terms of the governmentality of unease.

Referring back to the economic perspective, Banister pointed out that with the introduction of the one-child policy the incentive used in promoting family planning shifted from a patriotic one for the economic development of the socialist state to one more concerned with personal economic interests (Banister 1984, p.717). This transition can be viewed as moving away from Mao's charismatic ideological appeal to Deng's economic-pragmatic appeal. It is worth noting that there seems to be an underlying contradiction here in that the referent object was always the collective socialist state yet there is a clear shift from the collective imperative of macroeconomic growth to individual microeconomic benefits. It turned out that the first few years of the one-child policy, with its individual economic appeal, were not as effective as the old policy, with its ideological appeal. As the early implementation was deemed to have been powerless to regulate the reproductive behaviour of the people, it was followed by strict enforcement of the one-child policy with coercive means like forced abortion and sterilisation. This eventual *de jure* securitisation to a certain extent contradicted what Chen said so confidently at the beginning of the implementation: 'when the economic factor [of individuals] is solved, a greater part of the [national] problem of having more or fewer children and the problem of their sex will also be solved' (Chen 1979a, p.730). The contradiction here was that not only economic appeal was not effective in suppressing the birth rate, but also chapter 6 would explain economic well-being of individuals in fact were capital to resist the one-child policy such as buying a second child permit.

The implementation of the one-child policy was backed up mainly by the economic incentive that families with one child would be economically rewarded; there was no

penalty for having two children, but higher order births than that would incur fines (Banister 1984, pp.712–713). Chen pointed out that within two months of the policy being announced these kinds of economic incentives had been put into practice by at least 9 provincial governments including Beijing, Tianjin, Sichuan, Shandong, Shanghai, Anhui, Hunan, Gansu and Guangdong (Chen and Chen 1979, p.349). Although the economic incentives and disincentives varied according to the different local situations across the party state, families that wanted to obtain these benefits would normally go to the birth planning committee and sign a ‘one child certificate’ to promise not to have more than one child, in accordance with the party’s plan and under its supervision. A fixed stipend would be given to these urban one-child families, and rural ones would receive extra work points and grain share every month until their first child reached the age of 14 (Chen and Chen 1979; Banister 1984).

Other material benefits included better housing (and farmland for rural families), higher priority in academic admission and job applications, larger pension payments and free medical care for the only child. The range of positive incentives provided depended on the economic situation of the local government (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985, p.593). As for the economic disincentives for families who had more than three children, there would be a 5-10% penalty directly deducted from urban parents’ monthly wages, and they also had to pay for the education and medical care of their children; rural families would be fined in terms of work points, and the additional child would not be entitled to any land or grain allowances. There were also signs of tightening the enforcement of the one-child policy in Jilin and Tianjin provinces, where there were fines for all second children (Banister 1984, p.724). The negative incentives also extended from an individual perspective to collective punishments for unplanned birth, ranging from job dismissal, forced sterilisation and abortion, creating peer pressure among the Chinese (Wong 1984, pp.222, 238).

There seems to have been a very short honeymoon period after which the one-child policy changed from a supplemental *de facto* nature to a coercive *de jure* one as the results of its early implementation were not deemed to be satisfactory. Chen Pi-Chao, professor

of political science at Wayne State University, traced the statistics and evaluated the performance of the policy over time. Chen noted that almost one-third of Chinese families had signed the one child certificate by 1980 (P. Chen 1980). However, the progress of the one-child policy then stalled as the percentage of one child families did not continue to increase after that. In fact, there were some setbacks when new laws and economic policies were adopted. For example, Deng's pragmatic economic policy introduced a productive responsive system in which rural families could earn more by working harder so that the entire economic development would be boosted by an increase in grain production.

But this undermined the effectiveness of the economic disincentives of population control as rural families were able to pay the penalties for having extra children (Wong 1984, p.227). It led to a lower rate of issue of one child certificates (only 19% of rural couples) had signed them, far below the CCP's target of 50% (Chen 1984b, p.54). Even though the economic appeal was more effective in the urban areas, where the percentage of families signing one child certificates reached 33%, Wong pointed out that the relatively large number of families enjoying the economic benefits and priorities in schools and housing rendered it meaningless. as one-third has it (Wong 1984, p.230). There was also a new marriage law which aimed to discourage early marriage, yet unsurprisingly it had the reverse effect, boosting the percentage of young marriages in the early 1980s (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985, p.587), which made the stringent target clearly impossible to reach in time. All of these setbacks pushed the CCP to pursue a more coercive *de jure* securitisation of population growth in the PRC.

The ambitious goals set by the CCP was one of the main factors driving the rapid policy escalation in which more coercive measures were adopted rather than relying on supplementary economic encouragements and discouragements, i.e. a sudden shift from a *de facto* to a *de jure* population policy. During the 1970s, Chen and Miller had already recognised the CCP's tendency to seek 'outstanding results' by setting ambitious targets in reducing population growth (Chen and Miller 1975, p.354). In their paper, they highlighted the mobilisation of the CCP's supervision across different levels, in rural areas from communes to brigades and teams, and in urban areas from districts to wards and residential

small groups, to ensure that the party could exert its own influence on its people in their reproductive decisions.

The monitoring of birth control was comprehensive, encompassing macro goal setting and various micro controls to achieve these goals. Wong described the situation in which limited birth quotas in local units meant the Chinese had to wait for their turn, leading to a check and balance among peers (Wong 1984, p.238). This was because if someone in the same unit had an unplanned birth, it would use up the quota, leaving others who behaved well and followed the rules in a disadvantaged position. Therefore, in the past, the macro goals set by the CCP were achieved by the micro checks and balances across different levels imposed by the people rather than by direct intervention, i.e. a *de facto* politicisation. As Chen and Miller put it, 'the way the leaders can influence administration and personnel down to the lowest levels seems to be unique' (Chen and Miller 1975, p.361).

This thesis argues that it is this special structure that led to a socialist approach to securitisation; that the CCP officials, as SRIs (security rhetoric initiators), denounced population growth as a threat and started the securitisation, then the idea was transferred to various levels and the people, as SRAs (self-reinforcing actors), reconstructed the idea based on their own understanding and contributed to the securitisation. Therefore, the socialist state should be regarded as a whole which is a giant securitising organism, as the securitisation was not a simple top-down or bottom-up process, but worked like an organic mechanism in which every organ had its own responsibility. Emphasis on this structure appeared in Vice Premier Chen's work (Chen 1979a, pp.727–728) and Chen and Miller wrote that 'leading comrades at each level must strengthen leadership and conduct penetrating and education' (Chen and Miller 1975), which shows that considerable manpower was needed to achieve the securitisation. Considering the huge amount of human resources deployed at different levels to oversee the process since the early 1970s (Chen 1984a, p.130), there is a reasonable argument that if all this manpower of the CCP had instead been dedicated to the modernisation of the party state, it might have been more effective in economic terms than controlling population growth, but that doesn't take into account the political consideration of sustaining the one party state.



The justifications of Hua, the premier of the PRC, to have a ‘crash program for 20 to 30 years’ to strictly enforce the one-child policy from 1980 was the ambitious goal of limiting the Chinese population to 1.2 billion by 2000 (CPC 1983). Yet again, although the calculations showed why only a one-child policy could achieve this, there was never a clear rationale on how this goal was set. It was merely a discursive device to declare population growth as an existential threat to the 4 modernisations and thereby to legitimise the adoption of the one-child policy as the emergency measure. All of a sudden, while ‘one is enough’ had been the principal slogan for 1979-1985 (Chen 1980, p.71), it no longer meant merely that one child families would be publicly praised and those with high order births would be fined. Instead, the strict population policy was gaining legal force and the enforcement of the population law was becoming keen and violent. As Qian Xinzhong put, ‘without the backing of law, planned birth control work cannot persist. With law, planned birth work will gradually get onto the right track’ (Wong 1984, p.224). Both the rhetoric construction and the exceptionally ambitious targets were leveraged to legitimise the legal enforcement of controls over people’s reproductive decisions, and this amounted to a *de jure* securitisation.

In fact, this was being carefully planned in late 1979 as Vice Premier Chen raised the need to legislate for the legal punishment (Chen and Chen 1979, pp.352–353), which made the securitisation a *de jure* one. Wong reviewed the modification of the constitution of the party state in 1982 and revealed that it imposed the obligation on the people to practice one child families in Article 49 (basic rights and duties): ‘both husband and wife have the duty to implement fertility planning’ (Wong 1984, p.221). There were other amendments, such as Article 89 granting the state council administrative rights to carry out its responsibility for birth planning, which signified a stepping up of official control by the established one-party system. Additional description was added to article 25 that birth planning was to ‘achieve compatibility between population and various socio-economic development plans’ (ibid), which to a certain extent accords with the rhetorical construction of the existential threats to economic development (although the emphasis on social problems was not strong).

Once the role of the state council and its organs had been legalised, the coercive practices of birth planning were intensified in pursuit of the almost unattainable goals set by the CCP. When one of the top CCP officials, Wang Pingshan, was interviewed, he firmly stated that:

Those women who have already given birth to one child *must be* fitted with IUDs, and couples who already have two children *must undergo sterilisation* by either the husband or the wife. Women pregnant outside the plan *must adopt remedial measures [induced abortion]* as soon as possible (Southern Daily 1983).

Wang claimed that these practices were approved by the party state and there should not be any exceptional case where a third child could be born. In line with such policy enforcement, birth planning officials would ‘visit’ families who did not sign the one child certificate and refused to leave until these families had agreed to sign the certificate. If they broke the promise, they would face forced sterilisation and abortion (Whyte *et al.* 2015, p.150). According to the statistics, in 1982 almost 70% of married women were using contraceptive devices (Chen 1984b, p.53). 34.8% of these women, estimated at about 20 million, had been fitted with IUDs. The CCP prohibited the removal of IUDs from these Chinese women without authorisation from the state council or birth planning committee (Wong 1984, p.230). That was in the early 1980s, although it was as feudal as medieval Europe. There were also estimates of as many as 7 million forced abortions and 58 million forced sterilisations performed by non-professional “barefoot” doctors (Banister 1984, p.720). Such extreme coercive measures reflected the thirst for ‘outstanding results’ recognised by Chen and Miller (Chen and Miller 1975). The political culture of the one party state always wanted to see impressive intermediate results and was extremely pragmatic without taking its people's rights and pain into account, because the one-child policy was originally designed as a stepping up of control over its people to strengthen the rule of Deng's new government.

The coercive policing is generally regarded as having reached a peak in 1983-1984, after which there were slight relaxations according to the local conditions (Hardee-Cleaveland and Banister 1988; Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985). There was a document released by the Central Party Committee in 1984 that again stressed the need to tackle the economic threats caused by population growth in order to justify the use of force in policing the one-child policy (SFPC 1984). The use of force in terms of forced sterilisation and abortion had led to such strong resistance, especially in rural areas. The document issued guidelines to frontline birth control practitioners that the one-child policy should be carried out in a reasonable manner. It allowed the local officials to issue a second child permit in the rural areas but strictly prohibited high order births. The document also mentioned birth planning among ethnic minorities, who were mostly allowed to have two to three children depending on the population of that ethnic group.

Regarding forced sterilisation and abortion, the SFPC restated that there were local officials who had “misunderstood” the one-child policy and carried out coercive enforcement. The document claimed that any unofficial practice to enforce the one-child policy was prohibited. Yet according to Scharping’s interviews with some local officials, these frontline birth control practitioners, i.e. SRPs, still encountered furious reactions while policing for the one-child policy in 1987 (Scharping 2013, p.3) as the Chinese were angry at the unreasonable policy and making the policy a legal responsibility by no means helping to ease the discontented. The *de jure* securitisation only gave the legal reason to the SRPs to enforce the population policy. There were still radical attempts by the CCP government to displace the booming urban population and their new-borns to rural areas (Banister 1984, p.719). They were actualised under the name ‘Go West policy’, an economic incentive, decades later. There was also a household registration system that tied the Chinese to the place they born (both urban and rural) for social benefits in order to manage the overpopulation. This had led to a massive population who went from rural to urban areas to work without any social benefits, e.g. medical care. It also led to a massive movement of people every year at the time of the Lunar New Year when factory workers needed to go back and visit their only child, who was trapped in his/her birth place for

education and medical care. Schaping pointed out that the CCP officials in 1994 did admit that there were ‘shortcomings and mistakes’ in such coercive means (Scharping 2013, p.3).

The strongest ever resistance to the coercive policies compared with the Later, Longer, Fewer policy can be attributed to the fact that the power of decision making was taken away from the people and handed to the CCP in a way that symbolised and maintained the party’s control and rule over its own people. Although the Chinese had turned on each other and maintained the check and balance among themselves during the supplementary Later, Longer, Fewer policy, it was still a *de facto* politicisation of population growth as the reproductive decisions were still largely in the people’s hands.

Nonetheless, when the emergency policy, i.e. one-child policy, was legitimised and enforced by means of forced sterilisation and abortion, the *de jure* securitisation ignited conflicts between individual and collective interests which radicalised the matter. The stand-off between the sustaining of family bloodlines and the economic development of the socialist state was mainly in the rural areas, which accounted for 80% of the population, and where the majority of families still had a second child (Chen 1984b, p.55). In the past, a 4 person family had been allowed in rural areas and there had been flexibility to allow peasants to have at least one son among their children. Unfortunately, this flexibility disappeared once there was a black-and-white legal responsibility for everyone to have only one child. It broke the hope of these families and radicalised the unsatisfied people to rise against such a *de jure* securitisation, which hindered the effectiveness of the policy.

In addition, it is also important to note that the strong ideological propaganda and Mao’s charisma during the politicisation in the 1970s had a significant role in convincing the Chinese that birth planning was for their individual benefit and the greater good. While Deng’s economic appeal highlighted personal economic interests, it was actually less persuasive because people were not convinced it was for their own good based on their personal calculations. The move away from the ideological stimulation of socialism and Maoism to a pragmatic economic development path more like capitalism (or a socialist approach with Chinese characteristics) in fact left the party state with less rhetorical power

to undertake threat construction and legitimise the surge in extraordinary measures to seize more control of its people.

These subtle yet remarkable differences are among the main reasons why the one-child policy did not make as significant progress as the Later, Longer, Fewer policy. It is also a paradox that the CCP gained more practical control by its coercive means while at the same time losing the rhetorical control and coherence needed to start another securitisation. The impact of the centralised initial securitising act was weakened as the reinforcing actors at all levels encountered growing resistance and had to carry out security practices which varied from place to place, while having more complex personal interests to look after. These divergences will be revealed in the next chapter along with the struggle of priorities according to the Paris School.

### *5.5 The Politics of Securitisation: The Governmentality of Unease and the Obeisance of Relevant Audiences*

Before we address the struggles of priorities, this section will reveal the governmentality of unease and the politics of securitisation in the case of the PRC. According to Caballero-Anthony's list, this will be about the 'factors affecting securitisation' (Caballero-Anthony *et al.* 2006, pp.5–6). After the use of coercive means, which peaked in 1983-1984, there were various minor relaxations of the policing of the policy. Within just five years, the population policy had gone from a supplementary one to a very harsh one through the securitisation of demographic growth by the socialist securitising organism. As Floyd described, the Copenhagen School approach focuses on the mechanism of securitisation and the discursive techniques adopted by securitising actors (Floyd 2007). This chapter has contributed to security literature by demonstrating how a non-democratic state practised a securitisation.

Beyond the scope of the Copenhagen School, the puzzle of why the population policy was rapidly securitised and radicalised, only for the policing of the policy to be relaxed within just five years, is yet to be solved. It is logical and conventional to consider that this

was due to the acknowledgement of the CCP of the side effects of the strong-armed policies, for example the significant numbers of female or disabled infants abandoned, the ghost population who did not have any identity or entitlement to education or welfare, who could easily be exploited and trafficked for illegal purposes (male child trafficking, or female child trafficking for prostitution across the region). Not to mention the most apparent and direct consequences of the one-child policy, the ageing population, which became one of the greatest worries of scholars monitoring the demography of the party state (Chen 1984a; Wong 1984).

Nonetheless, the rhetoric constructed for the securitisation of population growth was mainly an economic one, for example, Deng declared that his 4 modernisations were under existential threats and Chen regarded all these “population problems” in ‘macroeconomic terms’ (Chen 1979a, p.723). There was always a lack of social science perspective in examining and confronting demographic-related problems by the CCP itself as it was politically incorrect to have these social aspects problematised. “Population problems” remained as western capitalist terms that contradicted the Marxist perspective, and the CCP was also unwilling to turn the spotlight on its failures in the Great Chinese Famine and Cultural Revolution. In this sense, there is insufficient evidence to back up the notion that the one-child policy was brought in to solve social problems induced by demographic change.

Greenhalgh pointed out that population studies began to be included in policy making when the CCP required a scientific rationale to legitimise the adoption of the one-child policy (Greenhalgh 2008). Not only has she highlighted the lack of social consideration of the harsh policy, but also examined the use of scientific language as political leverage in the propaganda. As pointed out in the previous discussions, even though the CCP showed the reverse calculation that practising a one-child policy was the only way to achieve the population targets, i.e. in the first stage a natural growth rate of 5 per thousand by 1985, and in the second stage zero by the end of 2000 (Chen and Chen 1979, p.351), there was never a justification of how these targets were set. The Chinese Vice-Primer herself admitted there had been a lack of demographic data since the party seized power in 1949

(Chen 1979a). The last section of chapter 5 will explore the missing social and political perspectives that the CCP did not present to its people, which is regarded as politics of the securitisation.

Judging from the available data, the socialist securitisation of population growth neglected the social consequences of the policy. This could be due to the authoritarian political nature and that the CCP did not need to convince relevant audiences of the need for the extraordinary measure. The implementation of the one-child policy not only led to social problems in the long run but also revealed the political calculations of the party state, which the Paris School would call a governmentality of unease. Normally a securitisation has been through the process in which securitising actors declare a referent object is under existential threat, and these actors have to convince relevant audiences to legitimise the use of emergency measures as an extraordinary solution to tackle the threat in a quick manner (Buzan *et al.* 1998).

However, in the case of the PRC, the propaganda promoting the one-child policy was launched at the same time as this emergency measure was implemented. This chapter would argue that this was different from a normal securitisation in a democratic state because there was a political motive deeply connected to this securitisation. As stated before, the *de jure* securitisation took the power of making reproductive decisions from the people and thereby it was a stepping up of political control for maintaining the symbolic control of the party state.

In fact, CCP officials did make it very clear that this new population policy was carried out to reinforcement of the party rule as Chen put it: '[the policy is to] strengthen the leadership of the party, and include planned birth work in the work agenda of the party committees at various levels... establish powerful and energetic planned birth staff office units, This is the organisational guarantee for controlling population growth' (Chen 1979a, pp.352–353). The speech invokes the establishment of birth control committees, in which the CCP has its representatives at all levels (Chen and Miller 1975) so as to strengthen its all-round control of people's everyday lives. The CCP had discursively framed the

population boom as a threat to economic development and threw enormous effort and manpower into the enforcement of the one-child policy as a solution. The question is whether it was worth to using these extraordinary measures at such a high cost if was not proven that population growth was such an obstacle to economic development?

The answer is negative. By adopting the approach of the Paris School that looks at the politics of securitisation, we can see that even though the threat only existed in discursive constructions, it still induced fear that drove the people to rely on their state government to tackle the threat, i.e. it was a governmentality of unease to reinforce the new transition to Deng's leadership. A similar tactic was used every time there was a transition of the CCP leadership; the most recent example would be the anti-corruption campaign by Xi when he came into power, which was actually a way to eliminate his political opponents in his early rule (Leonard 2012). Returning to the case of the one-child policy, which was a significant policy that lasted for almost 4 decades, it clearly had a massive impact in terms of achieving the political purpose of this particular securitisation.

This chapter argues that the securitisation was not only for safeguarding economic development from the population boom, but also it served the political purpose of stabilising the rule of the new Deng government and also symbolised the control of the CCP for 36 years until the threat of population growth was reconstructed as the threat of population contraction. As the leaders in the post-Mao era desperately needed economic success, the new Deng government used the coercive one-child policy as a means of control and distraction to stabilise their rule.

Under the repressive policing of the emergency measure, the outcomes are three-fold: 1) there was social discontent (especially in rural areas) which led to strong resistance or even uprising against the rule of the CCP. This resistance was singled out and silenced by the strict policing of the policy; 2) the party state gained practical control of its people's reproductive decisions by both economic and legal coercive means, but the socialist ideological influence diminished under the rule of Deng, weakening its power to construct socialist rhetoric especially given the radical structural changes from a socialist country to



an extreme capitalist one (or a “socialist state with Chinese characteristics”) and 3) the population growth was below replacement level (2.2 children on average per women) for decades after the implementation of the one-child policy, leading to various artificial social and demographic crises requiring a new rhetoric of the demographic issue, i.e. a securitisation of population decline, which give rise to the new emergency “second child policy” in order to sustain the political control of the CCP towards its people's personal reproductive decision, instead of just returning the power of decision making to its people.

Before we stray too far from the argument that the PRC's securitisation of population growth served the political purpose of increasing the control over its people, we will first examine the projections of the Chinese population by the UN to reveal the fact that there was no need to implement the coercive one-child policy if the aim was just to prevent the population rising above the 1.2 billion target by 2000. The UN population projections in Bongaarts and Greenhalgh's 1985 article (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985, also see figure 9), predicted that if the Later, Longer, Fewer campaign had continued (maintaining a rate of 2.3 births per woman), the Chinese population size have been around 1.28 billion in 2000. It was not necessary to implement the coercive one-child policy as the target would have been automatically attained. It wasn't only Bongaarts and Greenhalgh's paper that endorsed these projections: there were similar predictions from other scholars like Chen and Kols and Song *et al.* and this information definitely reached the policy makers in the CCP (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985; Chen and Kols 1982; Song *et al.* 1982).

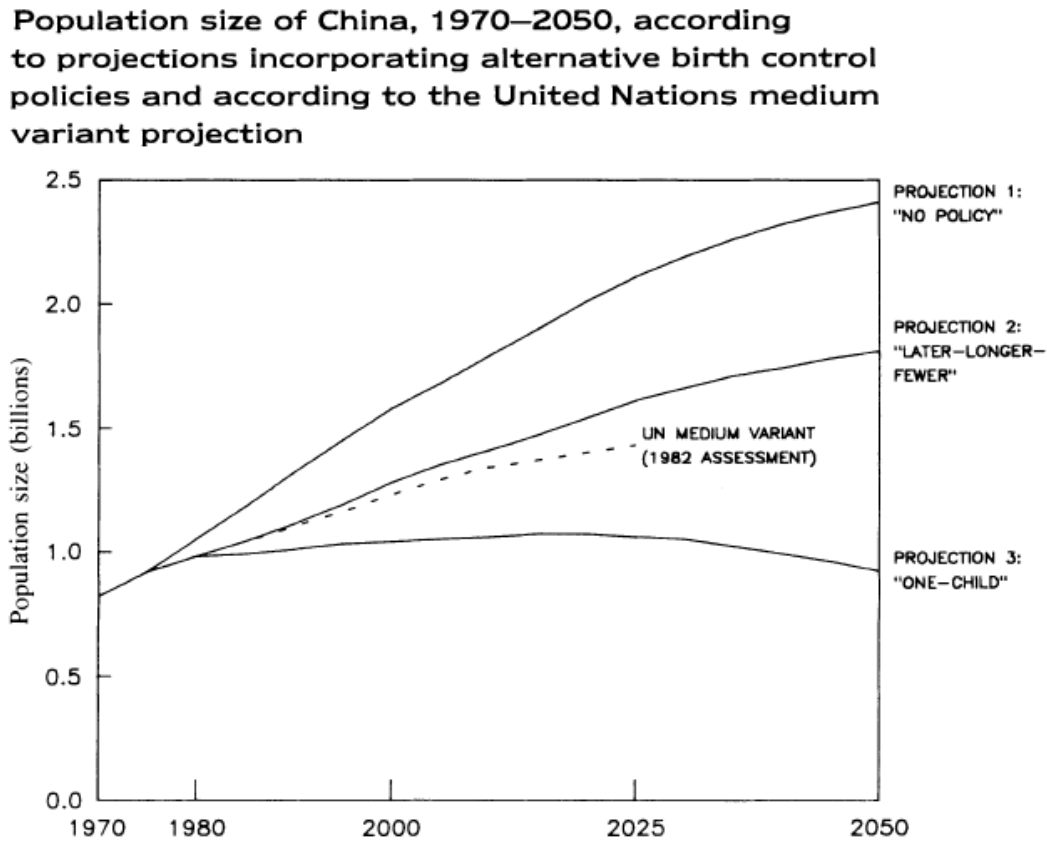


Figure 9: Population Projection of the PRC (Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985, p.591)

Nevertheless, the party state still carried out the strictest ever population policy. As Song put it, it was ‘unacceptable’ for the CCP to have 1.28 billion population instead of the 1.2 billion target figure (Song *et al.* 1982). Therefore, the one-child policy was introduced to prevent this 0.08 billion extra growth by 2000 despite knowing it would be difficult to enforce and likely to cause serious social setbacks such as an imbalanced population pyramid with disproportional sex ratio, ageing population, abandoned female infants and trafficking of children. These negative effects during the implementation of the policy will be examined in the next chapter. Nonetheless, it is clear from these objective figures that using the *de jure* securitisation was not a solution to ease the pain of demographic-related problems. The one-child policy was designed as a means of governmentality of unease that legitimised the CCP's intervention into its people's personal reproductive decisions in order to signify the ultimate control of the Communist party for

which the Chinese people were required to give up some of their rights in order to benefit from the economic growth brought by the party state.

In addition, to achieve zero population growth was a difficult target. Numbers could not express how difficult it would be to persuade the whole nation to switch from a 2.2 replacement level, which is generally regarded as normal, to one child per woman, which 80% of the population, i.e. the rural population, found it difficult to commit to. The target was set to make it hard to deliver in order to single out those who disagreed and use coercive enforcement such as forced abortion and sterilisation to tackle this discontent for the stability of the new government. Hence, the relevant audiences that needed to be “convinced” in the socialist securitisation were the people who resisted the party's control of birth planning, which was of the “utmost” importance for the realisation of the 4 modernisations. That was also the reason why the coercive measures peaked in 1983-1984 and were then relaxed: because the disagreement had been silenced and the political purpose of this securitisation had been achieved in the sense that Deng's early rule had been stabilised. People were compliant and therefore the need to sustain such heavy control was reduced. This trend of relaxing implementation of the one-child policy will be reviewed in the next chapter.

On top of that, the CCP was also well aware that the one-child policy would cause a wide range of problems. These demographic-related problems would also lead to social instability which the CCP would need to solve. This ultimately made the Chinese rely on the CCP, and the rule of the party could be sustained by rolling out new policies to tackle the problems created, i.e. a governmentality of unease. In fact, the supervision of the CCP is so deeply rooted in all levels of administration and production that it is too well connected to fail. After the Cultural Revolution, the extreme pragmatism and economically driven practice were the only dominant perspectives that the Chinese would accept as other core ideologies that might have been able to dictate the behaviour of the Chinese, such as culture, tradition, and religion, had been abolished. This is unlike the breakdown of the Soviet Union, where Russia remains even after the demise of the Communist bloc as its core values in terms of traditions, distinct culture and religious identity pull Russia together.

In the PRC, there was no other option competing as the core Chinese values to sustain the country if the Communist rule were overthrown (if extreme capitalism, or socialism with Chinese characteristics is not counted as one). The CCP is irreplaceable in this sense as it is deeply connected as an organism in all aspects of people's lives, leading to the situation in which it is extremely difficult to live without it and seek democratic rule for future generations. Perhaps in that sense, it was a great success for the CCP, although it could also be viewed as a betrayal of the notion of revolution and socialist liberation. While the securitisation of population growth demonstrates the stepping up of control in the personal lives of the Chinese, it has a much deeper meaning in that not only are reproductive decisions restricted, but also the possibility of what the future Chinese population could achieve is restricted as they are placed in a system in which the CCP's involvement and supervision are essential for people's everyday lives, leading to a lack of imagination for alternatives to pursuing the same extreme material pragmatic path of Maoism. To achieve such deeply connected control within the system was the reason why the one-child policy was implemented despite its obvious drawbacks. The drawbacks were part of the plan to legitimise and to strengthen the coercive control of the CCP as the saviour of its own people.

This chapter has presented the socialist approach to securitisation: that the Communist state should be regarded as a securitising organism. This chapter has mainly focused on Security Rhetoric Initiators, i.e. the CCP top officials. Self-Reinforcing Practitioners and Discontented Relevant Audiences are studied in detail in the next chapter, where we look through the Paris School lens at the security practice carried out as the one-child policy. This chapter has highlighted the changes in effectiveness and social responses from a *de facto* policy to a *de jure* one, i.e. from the supplementary Later, Longer, Fewer policy to the coercive one-child policy. Such coercive emergency measures seem to be implemented only in non-democratic countries for the political purpose of keeping the only party in power, especially when there is a transition to a new government.

In the next chapter, the thesis will continue to review the differences between the speech acts of the top officials and the actual security practices carried out by local security practitioners, i.e. SRP. The divergences between the two reveal what the Paris School called struggles of priority, and how such inconsistency could sustain over 36 years and its political importance to the governmentality of unease. Finally, it will also review the shifting discursive constructions of relaxing the securitisation of population growth and the one-child policy and moving towards a securitising of population decline and the current ‘second child’ policy.

## **Chapter 6 - Struggles of Priority in Security Practices and the Shift to Securitisation of Population Decline in the PRC**

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We are on the doorstep of the politics of the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC. This thesis has presented a socialist approach to securitisation by the combination of Security Rhetoric Initiators (SRI), Reinforcing Security Practitioners (RSP) and the Discontented Relevant Audiences (DRA) (see Chapter 4-5). Instead of regarding all these actors as separate, autonomous ones, this thesis argues that the interactive relationship among these actors contributed to the prolonged securitisation in the case of the PRC. Thus, these actors should be regarded as a giant securitising organism in which different actors play different roles and collaborate with each other.

After analysing the discursive speech acts of the CCP's top officials, which constituted the securitisation of population growth in 1979, this chapter goes on to study how the one-child policy was enforced with various security practices at different levels of the party state. This thesis adopts a combined framework of the Copenhagen School and Paris School, using the former in chapter 5 to deal with the rhetorical construction of securitisation by analysing speech acts, and the latter in this chapter to examine various security practices with a practical and relational approach.

While examining the policy implementation of the one-child policy, we found a clear divergence between the overall rhetoric constructed by the top officials, and the actual practices carried out by the lower rank officials across different regions. This divergence was rooted in disagreements on how strict the one-child policy should be. Even though the *de jure* securitisation had been used to justify the emergency policy, making it legally binding in the constitution, the local officers, who were the frontline security practitioners, confronted the rage of the Chinese people every day, and they were also under enormous pressure from the top party officials at the same time.

This chapter applies the Paris School's approach to study the divergence by examining the roles and techniques adopted by different agents in order to (re) structure and connect themselves to the twin issues of demography and security according to their own priorities and struggles, which is generally known as the politics of insecurity and the governmentality of unease (Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006). On top of that, this chapter argues that the prolonged one-child policy was a result of the power struggles between different actors. The top officials would always aim at maintaining their advantageous position in order to sustain their rule, while the discontented relevant audiences would strive to have a son at the most affordable cost, and the policy enforcers would attempt to maximise their own gain as they interacted with both sides.

It is the politics of insecurity that led to a constant exchange between these actors as they tried to pursue their own priorities. Such interaction sustained the one-child policy for almost 4 decades until the top officials noticed there was a need to shift the overall rhetoric from securitising population growth to securitising population decline in order to maintain its strategic control. In the last section of this chapter, we will explore this shift in rhetoric by examining the negative by-products of the one-child policy. By adopting the Paris School's relational approach, we will argue that the top officials' transformation of the rhetoric towards securitising population decline instead of de-securitising could be explained as an act to uphold their dominant position over others, providing an alternative perspective of relational and practical reasons behind the securitisation and de-securitisation of a particular issue.

### *6.1 The Paris School of Security Studies and its application to the case of the PRC*

The Paris School, inspired by Bourdieu's concepts, focuses on the study of practices and takes a relational approach to security studies (see chapter 2.9). The School is interested in locating the security agents and understanding the techniques they applied in order to connect themselves to the core of public discourse according to their own priorities. In Bigo's work, he looked at how other social actors re-articulated their ideas to fit in the contemporary security discourses, building up the networks and promoting their agenda

while at the same time attaching themselves to the core discussions in order to stay “competitive” (Bigo 2013, p.117). This (in)security continuum was continually enlarged as agents were attracted to enter by the fact that the security issue was constructed as “high politics”, “threat” or “survival”, and thus different layers of relational circles were built up as the various agents were connecting each other during the process.

Put simply, ‘Social action can be reasonable without being reasoned’ (Pouliot and Merand 2013, p.31). When the rest of the world looked at the party state and wondered why they implemented (or how they could implement) such a harsh demographic policy, this is because most observers do not share the same context with the people in the authoritarian state. Nonetheless, this knowledge can be acquired when the discourse for rationalising these practices is revealed using a practical and a relational approach. For example, White claimed that he was not surprised by the introduction of the one-child policy as ‘leaders had repeatedly shown themselves capable of launching radical programs of social transformation’ with the examples of the so-called Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution (White 2006, p.xii). His book *China’s Longest Campaign: Birth Planning in the People’s Republic, 1949-2005* in fact has a similar focus on gaining understanding of the political reasons through exploring the context and power relations in the case of the PRC.

In the light of the Paris School’s approach, we can gain a better understanding by examining the politics of securitisation, including the competition for the (re)framing of the threats, the agents’ own priorities and the struggles they faced in relating to other agents. Population growth was securitised by the top CCP officials with the rhetorical techniques of correlating the worst case scenario, i.e. failing to “modernise” and suffering an economic downturn, and the fear of the uncertain future, with demographic matters. The one-child policy was a product of the reconfiguration of the concept of threats in terms of population growth by facilitating the discourse on these worst case scenarios and the need to regulate births in the party state. Such a “stock exchange of fear” was overseen by what the Paris School called and there are professionals in the management of unease (Bigo 2002; Bigo 2013).



When the *de jure* securitisation was carried out and the emergency measure was legitimised, it was obviously the security rhetoric initiators who were the dominant agents. The CCP top officials held more power and capital with control of the overall rhetoric in the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC. Local officials, as frontline security practitioners, were required to follow the agenda and implement the policy, confronting the struggles from both their superiors and the struggles of the discontented. In this chapter, we study the struggles of these security professionals as well as the competition to reframe the categorisation of population-related threats according to their priorities and their relationships with other security agents.

The major disagreement among these agents was under what circumstances a second child permit should be issued. Broadly, the agents who had real practical involvement in the one-child policy, regardless of the positions they were in (higher rank SRI or lower rank RSP), generally preferred more flexible practices in the issue of second child permits to a rigid interpretation of the one-child policy. In contrast, the top officials or other agents who took part less directly in the implementation of the population policy adopted a much firmer stance on minimising and eliminating the possibility legitimate second births in Chinese society.

This chapter will explain this divergence using the practical and relational approach of the Paris School. By examining the practices of various agents, we can gain an understanding of their distinct logic based on the historical trajectories in relation to other agents. In fact, localised practices were not new in the context of the CCP's population policy. There were many experiential practices carried out differently by different provinces (P. Chen 1980) so the general one-child policy was modified according to the social reality of the local areas. A cycle of centralisation and de-centralisation of the birth planning practices was observed (e.g. White 2006, chapter 8) and this can be understood as the result of the changing power relationships in the securitisation of population dynamics.

For example, there were periods such as the late 70s to early 80s and the 90s which leaned towards the overall rhetoric of hard-line uniform practices of allowing strictly one child alone. In the mid-80s and after the millennium, there was more flexibility, allowing localised practices to flourish across various regions. In 2015, the one-child policy was not merely relaxed but lifted. This cycle of practices, this chapter argues, was the result of the competition for power, with different actors aiming to make security decisions that favoured the priorities of particular agents in the social space. According to Bigo, the reasons for these practices are relational (Bigo 2013, p.124). Scharping started his book with shocking scenes in which various local practitioners from different provinces were complaining about the implementation of the one-child policy, claiming it to be the 'Hardship Number One under Heaven', along with stories of discontented villagers' hostility towards these domestic agents (Scharping 2013, p.3). The discourse between Scharping and these local practitioners during the interviews has provided a relational explanation of why security practitioners would generally favour a flexible issue of second child permits. For them, there were practical reasons to maintain better relationships with the discontented as they were the front-line officers dealing with people's everyday resistance to the one-child policy.

The Minister of the State Population and Family Planning Commission, Wang Wei, blamed an unplanned population surge in 1987 on the local practitioners for issuing too many second child permits. This shows the divergence between rhetoric initiators and practitioners. This divergence was not only due to differences between their dispositions, but also to their power relations with other actors that affected the actual practices. Adopting the Paris School approach enables us to understand how different practices were carried out in different relational dimensions with specific logic of distinction.

In the regional birth planning conference in the mid-80s, local officers voiced the idea that issuing second birth permits was 'the wish of the masses' and, most importantly, *much easier to implement*, unlike 'the will of some high cadres' to just 'open a small hole' (allow only small numbers of second child permits as exceptional cases), which was not a realistic birth planning practice (SFPC 1984). The consideration was both practical and relational.

The top officials also had their own concerns about the deterioration of relations between the CCP and its people, and they worried that this policy would create a stand-off between party leaders, and domestic policy enforcers along with discontented peasants. The Paris School has provided a practical and relational approach to understanding the interactive process of shaping the social practices in the politics of securitisation of population dynamics.

### *6.2 The Chinese Attempt to Adopt a Relational Approach*

Qin presented a Chinese version of the relational approach to understanding the political practices of the party state (Qin 2016). In his paper *A Relational Theory of World Politics*, he criticised (Western) mainstream IR theories that ignore cultural differences with their pre-assumption of individualistic rationality. In his notes, he said that Buzan had reminded him of the existence of post-structuralism and thick constructivism, which are not based on individualistic rationality, yet Qin claimed he was criticising mainstream theories. Nevertheless, the relational sociology of Bourdieu was applied to IR and security studies by the Paris School for more than two decades. Without the fundamental philosophical building blocks, such as concepts from Bourdieu and Foucault, Qin's Chinese version of a relational approach lacks the depth needed to position itself as an alternative approach in IR.

Despite the fact that Qin attempted to fill the philosophical gap with Confucian concepts such as harmony and the pursuit of a middle path for equilibrium (中庸) as the guide to understanding Chinese international practices (Qin 2016, p.39), this so-called Chinese School relational theory is still far from applicable to our case study. First, given the analysis of the one-child policy in previous chapters, it is really questionable to what extent the Chinese still use Confucian teaching as a guide to behaviour, especially since the rise of extreme pragmatism (Maoism) in the Cultural Revolution, not to mention the politics and power struggles of the kind that Confucius himself heavily criticised. Interestingly, Qin also pointed out in his article that social relationships are for instrumental purposes (Qin 2016, p.38), which is consistent with Maoism's extreme pragmatism rather

than Confucianism. In addition, the practice of restricting people to small families for almost four decades violated Confucian teaching in a fundamental way (see chapter 4.2.2). The Confucian creed can serve as part of the habitus that oversees the practices of its followers, but in the case of the PRC, this is barely applicable. Qin's theory also lacks concrete concepts for analysis, the closest concept of habitus is only represented by the very vague term "cultural differences". His relational theory is still underdeveloped and not sophisticated enough to explain the behaviour of the Chinese in a satisfactory manner, at least in the case of the one-child policy.

Moreover, because the fact that Confucianism is an Ancient Chinese philosophy does not necessarily mean that Chinese security practices are based on Confucianism. The cultural binary opposition between West (instrumental rationality) and East (relational governance) that Qin suggested is very inaccurate as both sides have their philosophical grounds for the development of the relational theory in IR. However, the Paris School has a longer history and a more sophisticated approach to explaining security, which this thesis adopts. As for regarding Confucianism as agents' habitus, various Ancient Chinese cultural and philosophical practices may be found in other Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. There is an Ancient Chinese saying from the *Treatise on Literature, Book of Han* that "[people could] seek cultural successors in foreign lands when it is lost in the motherland" (禮失而求諸野). This old notion describes very well the decline of Ancient Chinese culture and philosophy since the Cultural Revolution. In turn, it is also hinting that in order to understand the reasons of practice of distinction in the securitisation of population dynamics, we have to trace the historical trajectories of the agents and their power relationship in order to reveal the politics of securitisation in a relational perspective, which will hopefully contribute to the accumulation of knowledge both for the case of securitising population dynamics in the PRC, and for exploring whether same model could be replicated in similar fields in other case studies.

### 6.3 Actors in the Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the PRC

Before beginning the examination of how different actors interact with each other given the power relations in the securitisation of population dynamics, it is essential to first understand the roles of various actors in the case of the PRC. The successful securitisation in 1979 gave population dynamics and its related problems to the status of security issues, i.e. high politics. As demonstrated in chapter 5, the *de jure* securitisation was initiated by the top CCP officials who took the power of birth decision from the people. Local officials who implemented the policy and their fellow Chinese were dragged into this securitisation of population dynamics the top officials initiated, and they bonded under the rules of the game. Depending on their ways of adaptation and resistance according to the techniques they adopted, there would be either security practitioners or the discontented which pursuit different goals and struggles of priority. Treating the one-child policy as merely a population policy is inadequate, especially since it was constructed as high politics by the top officials' rhetoric, serving political purposes of various actors. The application of the relational approach provides an alternative perspective in understanding the reasoning behind practices, instead of regarding securitisation as merely a one-dimensional way of problem-solving.

#### 6.3.1 The role of CCP Top Officials as Security Rhetoric Initiators

As the actors who established the securitisation of population dynamics, Security Rhetoric Initiators, i.e. the top officials, dominated the security rhetoric and set the rules which other actors had to follow. Both the rhetorical construction by the discursive techniques of securitisation and the implementation of its emergency measure, the one-child policy, served the political purpose of helping the CCP leaders to maintain its rule. However, before investigating how the top officials utilised the securitisation of population dynamics to pursue its political goals, it is worth first discussing what the bottom line for the CCP leaders was.

It is rational to assume that the first priority for the top officials was to maintain their advantageous position in relation to the lower-rank officers and ordinary Chinese, keeping their subordinates under their control in the context of the authoritarian state. It is obvious that the CCP leaders wanted to maintain their dominance as the only ruler of the party state – that was the sole basis of action: all moves stemmed from this will to power. As Buzan put it, ‘security is about survival’ (Buzan *et al.* 1998, p.21), and in this authoritarian setting the ability of the CCP to maintain its rule had to be their first priority, and was their bottom line. Otherwise, they might lose their power and influence, or even face prosecution by the people.

Various rhetorical constructions securitising population dynamics showed that the top officials not only raised the level of analysis from an individual decision-making level to a collective state planning level, but also identified the state as “the socialist state”. This is a common form of rhetoric that appeared in most propaganda and government documents. The emphasis on “the development of the socialist state” (see chapter 4-5), presumed the leadership of the CCP. Based on this necessity of keeping the only party in power for its survival, this chapter argues that through the securitisation of population dynamics, the CCP leaders are a guild of experts in the management of unease, who created the fear of an economic downturn and, more importantly, the fear of being left behind economically, i.e. unable to modernise. The amplification of fear about population growth differentiated this particular internal (security) issue and gave its creators, the security rhetoric initiators, legitimacy to introduce in 1979 the harshest population control in human history. Other actors, because their objective positions were not as advantageous as those of the top officials, had to choose – either to be reinforcing security practitioners who would follow and enforce the rules set by the CCP leaders, or to be among the discontented who opposed the implementation of the one-child policy, either actively or passively.

The competition among different actors is relational, as an actor rises and successfully (re)configures the categorisation of threats, the rhetorical power of the original actors is weakened. Therefore, it is a zero sum game to constantly re-frame and relocate themselves in the (in)security continuum as a series of threat constructions (and therefore leading to a

prolonged securitisation) of population dynamics. By tracing the historical trajectories, a cycle of tightening and relaxing of the policy was identified. This thesis argues that this was the result of particular actors taking the edge of the (re)configuration of threats with reference to the effects of prominent political incidents, e.g. the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and the end of the Cold War in 1991. In the later section, this chapter will demonstrate the re-framing of threat construction by transforming from securitising population growth to securitising population decline in order to fit the grander picture of the internal and external aspects of security to the top CCP officials.

Competition could also occur within a group of actors. For example, Mao's successor Deng endorsed the strict population target for the millennium as 1.2 billion at a conference of family planning in October 1984, yet in the following year, Premier Zhao revealed to the public his more flexible stance on family planning (Scharping 2013, pp.61–62). Both of them were top officials of the CCP, constructors of the security rhetoric of population growth. Nevertheless, as the Premier of the PRC, Zhao was in charge of the state council, who oversaw the administration of the birth planning commission. As the head of the practitioners, Zhao had certainly acquired more knowledge and information from the RSPs under his command about the difficulties during the implementation of the strict policy. This enabled him to understand the social and practical context that was shared by security practitioners, so it is not difficult to understand why he publicly raised the idea of more flexible practices in the enforcement of birth planning. This suggests that actors like Zhao had dual identities: he could be regarded as a security rhetoric initiator as the CCP top official, and as a security practitioner as the head of the security practitioners. Theoretically, the roles are not mutually exclusive; nonetheless, his main role as a top official was actively framing the overall rhetoric of birth planning (as it is rational to be more concerned about his continuity in the most advantageous position).

On the other hand, Zhao suggested remaining flexible on population policy implementation not only because it could smoothen the work of his front-line practitioners but also give him more political room to avoid being accused of failing to meet the hard targets of birth planning. Using the failure or poor performance of a particular policy for

*ad hominem* attacks to discredit political opponents is a common practice in the CCP from top to local officials, particularly prevalent during the anti-right movement and Cultural Revolution (see chapter 4). In fact, Zhao and Minister Wang were accused of not enforcing the one-child rigorously enough and both were removed from their favourable positions (Scharping 2013, p.69). Their removal was mainly related to their anti-leftist stance in the political landscape: they were against the strict population control that the leftist SRI wanted to maintain. Such differences in pursuing political paths often led to political rivalries among top officials and similar conflicts still exist today; for example Bo Xilai, the former member of the Central Politburo who pursued the new left ‘Chongqing model’, was removed from his position in 2012 because he had attempted to use his political alignment to compete with Xi to be the new leader of the party state (Leonard 2012, p.19).

Overall, the main role of the Security Rhetoric Initiators is always to stay competitive and keep themselves in an advantageous position among the top officials, and to maintain the necessary survival of the pact, centralising the power and having dominant control over other actors through the techniques of the management of unease. By forcing the others actors to obey the orders to practice family planning collectively, according to the rhetorical notion of ‘for the development of the socialist state’, the dominant actors reduced the decision making power of the local officers and the discontented. This is how the CCP centralised power in the one-party state. It is also necessary to bear in mind that among the top officials there were disagreements and political struggles concerning the overall rhetorical construction, and whether to relax or tightening the policy, which led to a cycle of policy implementation that will be discussed after we have gone through the roles of all actors.

### *6.3.2 The role of Regional and Local Officials as Reinforcing Security Practitioners*

Unlike the top officials, who actively achieved the securitisation of population dynamics for the pursuit of their political goals, the Reinforcing Security Practitioners, i.e. regional and local officials, were assigned a position in which their tasks were to support everyday practices, i.e. the implementation of the one-child policy. They were in reality



the major practitioners in administering and policing the population policy in order to meet the population target of 1.2 billion by 2000 set by the CCP leaders (CPC 1983). These security practitioners were also the ones who directly confronted the rage of the discontented.

As middlemen between the top officials and the discontented, the main priority for the local officers was to maintain the balance between the other two actors and gain the best advantage from both of them. Usually, the security practitioners had greater flexibility than the other two actors so they could re-position themselves either to fit in with the rhetoric of the top officials or to handle the everyday resistance of the discontented. Even though the structure of power in the party state was pre-set to ensure that the lower rank officers had to follow the general rhetoric of the authoritarian state in order to keep themselves in their positions, these local practitioners developed an array of tactics to “fulfil” the target while keeping the discontented relatively happy and maintaining a fair relationship with them. The sponsoring reasons for leaning towards the discontented could be monetary, relational or sympathetic reasons, and these will be reviewed in the later sections in this chapter.

The large land area and a vast population of the PRC provided room for different levels of RSP from provinces to cities, counties, towns, villages and local family planning small groups to exercise security practices that suited the interests of the local officers. The practices of the one-child policy varied according to the local officers’ understanding of the overall rhetoric and the reality of the implementation, including the enforcement of contraceptive measures and the issuing of second child permits. Scharping pointed out that some local officers interpreted the one-child policy literally, regarding it as a “one-child command” (Scharping 2013, p.54), while White catalogued numerous ways in which front-line practitioners did not to fully enforce the one-child policy due to the resistance of the discontented (White 2006, chapter 7).

In White’s interviews with local officers, there were some, in places like Hubei and Shandong provinces, who sympathised with rural families who had no sons and therefore

refrained from having these families sterilised after their first birth or delayed in collecting the fines for their later unplanned births (White 2006, p.182). This kind of sympathy was rooted not only in the traditional preference for sons but also in the general preference of the Chinese for having 2 children on average (Wang 1996, pp.102–103). More importantly, these security practitioners were officials who originally came from their local village, and though they were under pressure from top officials to limit birth, they were restricted by their relationship with the local discontented.

From this relational perspective, both local practitioners and the discontented were in the same front line of resistance, trying to minimise the unfavourable effects of the one-child policy. All this collusion between them, including help to dodge inspections, covering up the real situation by falsifying statistics, and reluctance to enforcing monetary penalties and involuntary sterilisations, can be regarded as a relationship among the disadvantaged actors in the securitisation of population dynamics, counterbalancing the influence of the dominant top officials, maintaining their positions and defending their interests. It is also worth noting that these kinds of exchanges occurred not only between local officials and discontented but also among these lower rank officials themselves. There were cases of local officials falsifying data which their superiors did not report to the top officials (White 2006, p.179). All these interactions that affected the implementation can be understood when we apply the practical and relational approach of the Paris School, to reveal the distinctive reasoning that led to different security practices in the case of the PRC.

Nevertheless, this is not to argue that the local officers were selfless actors who helped the discontented without other considerations. It is beyond doubt that the collusion of local security practitioners and the discontented was relational, as they were in similar disadvantageous positions, restricted by the top officials' rhetoric, but the local officials were also seizing the opportunity to gain advantage from their position as middlemen. For example, the implementation of the one-child policy actually generated a handsome amount of income for the local officials as they could charge 'however much they want to fine...seeing who you are' (Chu 2010, p.91). In Chu's book *Cosmologies of Credit: Transnational Mobility and the Politics of Destination in China*, she revealed a relational

pattern that how extensive a person's network was determined how much the local officers would charge them for an unplanned birth. Social networking, such as having a family member working as a low or mid-rank official, or simply being recognisable in the social space as a local representative, could be relational 'property and achievement' (Appadurai 1997).

This is what Bourdieu regarded as social capital that could gain favourable positions if it matched the prevailing settings of the particular social space (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). If we assumed that every actor constantly seeks to gain a better position for survival and security reasons, their objective role actually affects the capital they have and thus affects the techniques they can adopt to maximise their benefits in practical terms. As these reinforcing security practitioners were in charge of the administration and policing of the policy in regional and local areas, they received financial benefits from the local government for collecting fees for marriage registration and fines for unplanned births. In some extreme cases, the local officials even turned a blind eye initially and let the locals have a second child, so that they could have the extra monetary gain from collecting the fine, while at the same time have the relational gain of winning the locals' hearts. There were several cases recorded by White in which couples paid thousands of dollars in fines when they got a son by having an unplanned birth (White 2006, p.182) (as to how the locals could earn such a huge sum of money, it will be discussed in the next section about the discontented).

The loose enforcement of the one-child policy actually required less input from the RSPs, and therefore, in general, the RSPs were leaning towards what Premier Zhao suggested: a more flexible and decentralised implementation of the population policy to allow RSPs more flexibility to act according to the local context across different levels. In terms of political considerations, it was also in the RSP's interests to help to cover up the true figures and hide the poor performance from the SRIs, while gaining monetary and relational benefits from the relaxed policing of the policy. Nevertheless, there were exceptions, especially when the overall rhetoric was changing because of internal political struggles or external (international) incidents.

For example, 1985 and 1990 were the last years of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> five-year plans of the PRC, so in these years the local officials were compelled to enforce the one-child policy in a tougher manner in order to meet the target and fight for political survival. In short, the lower rank officials were the security practitioners between the top officials and the discontented, and they regarded themselves as the scapegoats in the conflicts between enforcing the CCP national policy and maintaining good relationships with their fellow citizens (Liu 1998). They strived to maintain a balance through the actual practices of the population and security policy and maximise monetary, relational and political benefits from both sides. For practical and relational reasons they were more inclined towards a relaxation of the one-child policy. They are important actors in the eyes of the Paris School as their security practices demonstrated the specific logic of distinction that enables us to understand the practical, political and relational sophistication of the implementation of the emergency measure in the securitisation of population dynamics.

### *6.3.3 The role of Discontented Relevant Audiences (DRA)*

Discontented Relevant Audiences are the final actors in the securitisation of population dynamics in the PRC. They are people who were originally discontented about the one-child policy and either resisted it in a passive manner such as colluding with local officers to get a second birth permit or directly challenged the legitimacy of the harsh population policy and confronted the authorities in an active manner. They were basically in the same position as the low-rank officers who were involuntarily bound by the rules set by the top officials. The discontented also attempted to fulfil their personal goals and compete with other actors by practical and relational means. The top priority for these ordinary Chinese was to have as many children (sons, specifically) as they would like at the lowest possible cost. Fred and Liu examined the practices and responses to family planning and argued that a preference for sons was still prevalent in the PRC after years of the one-child policy (Arnold and Liu 1986).

This obsessive son preference mattered a lot to the discontented, especially in rural areas as having a son was the major way to maintain both traditional and economic integrity.

It is a Chinese tradition that a son extends the family blood line, inherits lands and property and provides reliable manpower for the family (see chapter 4.2.2), whereas a daughter eventually becomes another family's labour (after marriage) and cannot serve as a good investment for security in old age. Feng commented on the implementation of the one-child policy and claimed that there were two conditions that had to be met in order to make the policy effective: 1) the policy must not contradict the traditional values of the local people and 2) the government must compensate for the negative consequences of from the policy (Wang 1996, p.113). The CCP top officials did not fulfil either of these conditions. Even more interestingly, Wang emphasised that these conditions needed to be fulfilled in individual terms, which contrasts with the general rhetoric putting collective interests ahead of personal interests in Chinese society.

In order to further their interests of having a son, the local officers employed various techniques to preserve their power to make personal reproductive decisions. Besides illegal ultrasound scans, abortion of female infants, having sterilisation devices removed on the black market, and reporting congenital defects of the child, fleeing from their hometown after having a first born daughter was quite a common tactic in rural Chinese society. It took advantage of the poor communication between different administrative areas in order to 'start again' in a new social space, trying to have a son in another part of the party state. The number of this floating population was huge, shooting up from 6.5 million in 1982 to 21.6 million in 1990, 43.05 million in 1995, 78.76 thousand in 2000, and 221.03 million in 2010 (Liang *et al.* 2014, figure 1). The central government issued *Measures for the Management of family planning of the floating population* in 1991 to combat the surge of unplanned births among the floating population (Li 2015, p.41).

Apart from fleeing to a different part of the country for a second chance to have a son, there were more mainstream techniques for these discontented Chinese to achieve their top priority made possible by its rising economic capacity. The most successful slowing down of population growth happened under the Later, Longer, Fewer policy during the 70s, which was the time of the most centralised socialist state-owned economic system in the PRC. In chapter 4, we described the socialist collective system of allocating resources and

closely monitoring people's actions through massive numbers of security practitioners placed at different levels. However, when Deng introduced the production responsibility system in 1979 it decentralised the political hierarchies as collective responsibility practices such as people's communes were replaced by individual household farms. The rural discontented thus enjoyed higher economic independence than in the previous socialist economy (Chang 1996). In addition, the Chinese began to be freed from the control of the Communist allocation of resources under this capitalist transformation. The resulting surge of economic capital enabled the rural discontented to purchase second child permits or to pay the fines for unplanned births to the local officers. Therefore, the extremely strong resistance from the rural discontented was not only due to traditional values, but also because there was more practical and economic capital which empowered people to say no to the rules set by top CCP officials.

As Deng's pragmatic reforms continued opening up the socialist state and transforming it into an extensive capitalist state, the dissolution of the socialist system began in urban areas after the reform in 1991. The CCP's control of births among urban Chinese was diminishing due to the surge in economic independence of the DRAs in cities and the increasing number of other social organisations after the opening up. This transformation led to a total collapse of socialist collective political and rhetorical control (of population affairs). The CCP lost its edge in monitoring its people closely with the old socialist system, as people were no longer restricted in the same workplace and bonded by the work unit as they used to be.

The urban discontented also began to be economically empowered after the 1991 reform, starting to escape from the dependent system and pursue their personal priorities rather than what the party rhetoric instructed them to do, although the semi-market mechanism in coastal cities inflated the cost of living, which in turn had a natural effect of lowering birth rates due to the high cost of raising children. The shift towards a market economy in the party state was a heavy blow to the rhetoric of the CCP on economic development for the socialist state in a collective manner (as the market economy emphasised individual gain instead of collective gain). At the same time, the party state

inevitably needed to come out from its old isolated position internationally when it was shifting towards a capitalist system. Both internal and external pressures forced the SRIs to reframe their rhetoric and reformulate the practices of the population policy, shifting the focus of the one-child policy from the early 90s. The following section will explain the policy cycle of the CCP's family planning in terms of relational and practical reasons.

#### *6.4 Explaining the one-child policy cycle using the Paris School approach*

Despite the fact that the cycle of tightening and relaxing the one-child policy in the PRC has been examined and described in various papers (e.g. Goldstein and Wang 1996), this chapter chooses to adopt the Paris School approach to give explanations to this policy cycle with reference to prominent domestic and international political incidents that affected the securitisation of population dynamics. After the securitisation of population growth in 1979, family planning was regarded as high politics by the Chinese leaders, who called it “fundamental national policy” (基本國策) in their five-year plans. Again, the strong-arm population policy was not merely about population growth itself, but was also used as a lever to strengthen the party's control of people's personal lives to sustain the SRIs' political rule. That is why, this thesis argues, the enforcement of the one-child policy actually varied according to political landscape domestically and internationally.

There were practical reasons for Deng to step up from the Later, Longer, Fewer policy to the one-child policy: these new top CCP officials needed the increase in political control to fortify their dominant position. This *de jure* securitisation was a security technique undertaken in 1979, the same year as Deng came to power. As demonstrated in chapter 5, the emergency measure escalated rapidly and continued to be very strict until about 1984, when the release of document 7 signalled a slight relaxation of the policy. The tightening of the population policy served its purpose by making the lower rank officials and their fellow Chinese obey and give away their power of decision making on birth. It also came down hard on the discontented who dared to stand up against the CCP leaders during its first implementation. This was exceptionally important for the top officials as their position could be reinforced through punishing these destabilisers. Policy relaxation came in after

these obstacles were cleared and these security imitators had secured their advantageous position.

The policy cycle started after the first relaxation of the one-child policy. It gave room to other actors to adopt adaptive techniques to bypass or violate the top officials' rhetorical construction. The local practitioners and the discontented had both been affected by the securitisation of population dynamics involuntarily having never intended to seek instructions from the CCP on their family size. The conflict began with the millennium target of maintaining a 1.2 billion population in the party state, a target that the CCP had never explained with the rationale for (see chapter 5.6). Since the ambitious target was written into the 7<sup>th</sup> five-year plan, it was necessary to achieve the target in order to keep the overall rhetoric alive, as the CCP leaders would rely on this framing to keep the other actors under their control. The ambitious millennium goal sparked conflicts between the SRIs and the RSP-DRA coalition as the latter was taking advantage by practising various techniques to serve their personal agenda, or use the Paris School's term, the struggle of priorities. This struggle eroded the possibility of reaching the population goal set by the overall rhetoric, and therefore the top officials highlighted it in document 13 in 1986. Minister Wang Wei publicly condemned the loose implementation of security practitioners that led to the prevalence of two-child families among the discontented (Scharping 2013, p.67).

Weak enforcement of the policy indicated that the top officials' control was weakening, which undermined their political purpose in securitising population dynamics. The decentralised implementation after 1984 led to a closer collaboration between local officers and the discontented to resist the one-child policy for the pursuit of their own priorities. The former wanted to maximise their own benefit between the top officials and the discontented, and the latter wanted to secure their power to decide to have a son. The collusion between local practitioners and the discontented had the result that a second child was generally permitted in rural areas in 1988 as long as the parents could present "practical difficulties", such as reporting that their first daughter had a congenital disorder (Peng 1991). This undoubtedly involved corruption within the RSP-DRA coalition and therefore



the CCP leaders set up an anti-corruption campaign and encouraged the Chinese to report suspicious cases to the Ministry of Supervision's hotline. 190 senior security practitioners were found guilty of corruption and imprisoned in 1988 (He 2000). In order to take back control of both local practitioners and their fellow Chinese, the top officials issued 4 drafts of new family planning regulations and circulated them to various levels of security practitioners, and six provincial governments introduced a stricter population policy between 1988 and 1991 (Scharping 2013, p.86). The tightening of the implementation was to ensure that numbers would not miss the target by too much in 1990 when the 7<sup>th</sup> five-year plan ended, even though population projections in 1988 already indicated that it was impossible for the PRC to achieve the millennium target (Jiang and Chen 1988).

Before the top officials had recovered their dominant position, social unrest rose rapidly beyond anyone's expectation, and the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989 was one of the most violent military suppressions in Chinese history. Since Deng and other post-Mao leaders had come to power in the late 1970s, many reforms had been launched in one decade. The one-child policy was merely one of these reforms. While all these reforms were taking place at the same time in the 1980s, they contradicted each other, just as the production responsibility system empowered the Chinese with more economic capital to increase their upward mobility to counter the dominance of the overall rhetoric.

The slow pace of opening up and capitalist economic development, combined with the fact that young people were rushing to coastal cities, led to numerous demographic-related problems such as unemployment, poverty and social unrest in urban areas. When more new policies were introduced to tackle these population-related problems, e.g. the college graduate job placement system and the civil service recruitment system, they turned out to be just as contradictory and ineffective as other reforms (Yang 2014). The former required college graduates to seek a job by themselves as in any other capitalist country, but the latter left the door open for someone to get a government job through political networking (this could also be explained by the relational approach). University students in Beijing failed to see any upward mobility in such an unfair and dire situation and saw all these contradictory reforms as the symptoms of a political struggle among the top officials. In

fact, population-related problems were being leveraged by the old left in the CCP to agitate against the party secretary Hu Yaobang, accusing him of moving away from the socialist path and transforming the party state with Western values including democracy and human rights.

In 1986, university students protested against the manipulation of elections by the CCP and demanded democracy. The demand spread to other universities in the party state, which led to the first national student protest for democracy. The national protest lasted for 27 days and was removed by the mass arrest of protesting students in the capital city on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1987. Hu took the blame for bourgeois liberalisation and was removed from his position 3 days after the protest. Zhao replaced Hu as general secretary. He was also in favour of market reforms and supported the relaxation of the population policy. The struggle between the top officials gave opportunities to other actors in the party state not only because there were some CCP leaders supporting the relaxation, but also because their bourgeois liberalisation reforms empowered others outside the leadership to pursue their personal priorities instead of the collective priorities. It was a shift in the balance of power in relational terms. Two years later, Hu passed away in Beijing, which sparked a series of mourning and memorial events in the capital city. University students from different provinces came to express their sadness and advocate the westernisation reforms of Hu. Posters criticising corruption, authoritarianism, media control and unemployment appeared all around universities in 1989. These mourning events unnerved the top officials as they not only affected the old left Communist leaders' stance but also endangered the rule of the CCP in the party state – which was the bottom line for the CCP.

Thousands of students protested in Tiananmen Square and a considerable number of them went on a hunger strike to demand direct conversations with the top officials. Although there were CCP leaders such as Zhao who sympathised with the students, the CCP decided to deploy the “People's Liberation Army” (PLA) to evict the young protesters. The CCP official report claimed that there were around 300 deaths and over 2000 injured when the PLA rolled tanks and soldiers into Tiananmen Square. Regrettably, this use of coercion in the Tiananmen Square massacre was publicly praised by the CCP as it

eliminated the instability that had shaken the rule of the authoritarian government. Such a hard-line stance was transferred to population policy, where the CCP advocated a strict implementation of the one-child policy, including what they called the “five procedures”: seizing grain, livestock, and furniture, demolishing houses and incarceration (Larus 2012, p.199).

While examining whether rural people played any role in this political uprising in the late 80s, White discovered that peasants were not concerned about the political uprising in 1989 (White 2006, p.219). This to a very large extent disappointed a lot of western scholars who had hoped that the Communist state would transform itself into a democratic state during the opening up, especially when they witnessed the introduction of the Organic Law of the Villagers' Committees of the PRC in 1987, which allowed rural Chinese to vote for their own representatives. Generally, it was thought that with increasing numbers of middle-class people, i.e. rich peasants, thanks to the production responsibility system, there would be a greater possibility of transition towards democracy (see discussions in Newton and Deth 2009, pp.54–55). But there was a parallel political structure in the PRC ensuring that even though village representatives were elected from the rural people, there was always a party member appointed by the CCP who exercised the party's control at that level of the committee (Zou 2008; Lieberthal *et al.* 2014).

The burning fuse of the national protest in 1989 was lit by university students, not by the rural Chinese themselves. The reason for this can be explained in relational terms by the Paris School: the rural people thought that as long as they could maintain a relatively good relationship with local officers, including various forms of collusion to escape the top-down population control, their personal priority of having a son could be fulfilled. Therefore, it would have been irrational for peasants to have forgone their local stability in exchange for the possible changing political and relational landscape for the greater good of Chinese civilisation. A couple of years later, there was a conference in 1993 where scholars studying Chinese society examined the public sphere and civil society of the party state. Madsen suggested that in order to avoid social instability, the party state should leave room for the growth of public spheres and civil society (Madsen 1993). He believed that

using a more cultural and moral disposition to approach the building of the public sphere and civil society would be a practical way to make different actors work together and achieve the greater good, instead of calculating personal economic and political disposition.

Nonetheless, this research has shown that, in a totalitarian state which has abolished civil society, with the historical disposition of Mao's extreme pragmatism, it is unsurprising that each actor was fighting for their own personal priorities rather than pursuing the greater good, whether that means collective birth planning for the socialist state by the CCP leaders or the fight for democracy by the Chinese students. The cultural and moral habitus of the Chinese was replaced by economic pragmatism and political struggling for their priorities. In this situation, there would be an absence of civil society, in Madsen's perspective, and the security practitioners and the discontented would continue to try to get round the rules set by the SRI and maximise opportunities to pursue their personal priorities, and there would not be any fundamental change in the securitisation of population growth. This is what led to the prolonged one-child policy that lasted for 4 decades.

After the student protest was removed by a massacre, the top officials moved to an even harsher enforcement of the one-child policy to go after the DRAs, especially the rural dissenters. The top officials claimed they were tackling an emergency for the collective good with their tough measures. Minister Peng highlighted the connection between birth planning and rural economic development, saying that the fewer children people had, the faster they could gain prosperity (Larus 2012, p.199). This was a resurgence of *de jure* securitisation, which relied on strict legal command in line with political rhetoric portraying the worst case scenarios for the party state, so it was claimed that there was no room for flexibility in implementing the policy by local practitioners, and the Chinese must give up their personal priorities for the "collective good" and most importantly it was a legal requirement that the Chinese must obey the law that was shaped by CCP's security rhetoric on birth control. The old balance of relational power was broken as the massacre legitimised the tightening of control. The coercive measures not only prevented the discontented from fighting for a better position but also commanded the lower rank

officials to enforce the top officials' rules of the game in a more rigorous manner. With the hard-line CCP leaders who were in favour of strong-arm (birth) control taking over the construction of rhetoric after the massacre, there was a huge surge of population policing, surveillance and disciplinary punishments of local officials for data falsification.

The coercive population policy was extended to ethnic minorities in the new mass propaganda portraying of population growth as an existential threat to the party state. In the past, there was relatively mild birth planning in places like the Inner Mongolia which allowed ethnic minorities in urban areas to have two children and in rural areas three. A half year after the massacre, there was a new rule that only families with at least one daughter were eligible for a permit to have a third child (Scharping and Heuser 1995). In places that were more politically sensitive, such as Tibet and Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region, the three child limit and sterilisation also began to be adopted in 1990, despite their being supposedly "autonomous regions".

As for *de facto* autonomous regions within the PRC, the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macao were exempt from any birth restrictions, which led to later population-related problems, including mass migration and illegal migration, when the "socialist state" turned towards capitalism during a later stage of opening up the economy. The Tiananmen Square massacre did raise doubt in the international community about whether it was 'morally defensible to deliver 6 million people into the hands of a Communist dictatorship', a question that a Hong Kong reporter put to Margaret Thatcher before the handover (Liu 1996), but it was not enough to generate any political moves internationally. In the later section of this chapter, we will examine how different population-related problems spread from the PRC to these Special Administrative Regions while we evaluate the population policy and the shift in the rhetoric. But before entering into the policy evaluation, it is crucial to lay out how another prominent international incident led to a tightening of the policy.

The PRC was not the only country that experienced a huge political uprising in 1989: its socialist ally East Germany fell into the capitalists' hands as the Berlin Wall was been

torn down in the same year (Isaacs and Downing 1998). This led to a domino effect across other Soviet countries in 1990; what had been feared actually happened 35 years after the domino theory was founded. So there was external political pressure on the PRC to strengthen its control in order to keep itself in power, which was the top priority of the CCP leaders (see chapter 6.4.2 above).

In 1991, in the 8<sup>th</sup> five-year plan, Deng not only led yet another new reform leaning towards a capitalist system but also tightened the control of birth planning, one of the means for the top officials to secure their position. In the same year, the CCP leaders published a document called *Decision on strengthening family planning work and controlling population growth* which claimed that all levels of the CCP government had the responsibility to achieve the primary objective of the PRC, birth control (CCCPC 1991). This signified a new phase of power struggle as the top officials attempted to centralise power against the collusion of RSPs and DRAs. In document 9 *Decisions on strengthening the family planning programme for strict control of population growth*, it introduced a “one ballot veto power” (一票否決權), which meant that any local officer not fulfilling population targets would fail the overall performance evaluation and have no chance of getting a bonus or promotion. In addition, the document introduced the idea of “monitoring by the first in command” (第一把手親自抓), which literally means that the first in command, i.e. the SRI, would monitor the performance of local practitioners on birth planning. This shows the determination of the Central Committee to reinforce its authority over local officers and signal to the Chinese people its domination.

The document repeatedly emphasised article 49 of the constitution, which stated that all Chinese had the duty to implement family planning (Wong 1984), yet there was no family planning law in 1991 that stated the consequences for people guilty of “violating the constitution” (as the purpose of the constitution is to regulate the government, not the people). Therefore, in order to increase their power of control, the CCP leaders proposed a national birth planning law, aiming to standardise the enforcement of the one-child policy regardless of local conditions and ethnic composition in different provinces. There were provisions such as raising penalties, increasing forced contraception, redefining the

obligations of the security practitioners in family planning and de-localising local practices by which the CCP aimed to uproot the collusion between RSPs and DRAs against the overall rhetoric. Low-rank RSP bodies, including township, village committee, and local small groups, were specified in the document as having to be more closely supervised in order to ensure the accuracy of birth planning reports and to prevent concealment of unplanned births. Any lower rank official who allowed unplanned births would be penalised and would be removed from their position.

Three aspects of conducting birth planning were emphasised: 1) promotion and education, 2) contraception and 3) birth planning as a regular work routine. There was clearly a surge in micromanagement of local officials in the setting up of an information network exchange at provincial level for top officials to oversee the practices of the one-child policy. In addition, to support all the increasing workload on family planning, the central finance doubled from RMB 1 yuan per person to 2 yuan, for the recruitment of additional staff and the provision of supplementary support ranging from medical care and contraception devices to food and housing. The document also included ideas from eugenics, reasoning that the harsh population policy was for a “better quality of Chinese people” (CCCPC 1991).

Yet, as Peng pointed out, the provincial family planning targets in 1991 were not actually as strict as the name “one-child policy” implied, as the majority of targets were set at the rate of 1.5 children per family (Peng 1994, p.15). This shows that there was still a certain gap between the hard-line decision document from the top officials and the front-line practitioners’ practices in reality. The average targets that allowed 1.5 children per family signify that there were still many exceptional cases where the local officials granted a second child permit to the discontented, and not until the millennium was there any uniform family planning law. The early 90s was the start of a new cycle of the top officials tightening their control over other actors, as well as a new phase of shifting rhetoric as the party state became increasingly internationalised in economic terms. It is also worth noting that ethnic minorities in autonomous regions such as Xinjiang had a target of two children per family. Although this seems to be a loose target compared to the one for majority Han

people, there had not been any birth control regulations that applied to ethnic minorities in this autonomous region before, and therefore it was another extension of control by the CCP leaders which dragged a new group of discontented into the securitisation of population growth.

After the new wave of reform carried out in 1991, the PRC also had a changing rhetoric with regard to the insecurity created by population dynamics. In 1995, the central government issued two important documents that signified this shift: the *working summary of family planning 1995-2000* and the *white paper about Chinese birth planning*. The former set out internal guidelines to restate the firm stance of the CCP leaders to the other actors, which was similar to the previous rhetoric. The latter, however, began by mentioning the UN Population Division, which indicates an attempt to frame its domestic population policies within the big picture of the international community. This first population white paper of the CCP situated itself on the same front line of population control as the UN Population Division for the sustainability in humankind (SCIO 1995). It asserted in an explicit manner that the one-child policy, despite its shortcomings, was beneficial for the international community.

Apart from repeatedly reinforcing the ideational relationship between population growth and economic development and the strong stance of the CCP regarding population control as a strategic concern, the white paper mentioned various population-related threats such as food and health security issues. This was very different from previous domestic propaganda in terms of the range of population-related threats since most of the previous internal propaganda focused mainly on the 4 modernisations for economic development. Even though some also mentioned improved health care for women and children and “liberation” of women from childbearing, there was a significant amount of carefully compiled data in the white paper about the progress made by the one-child policy in terms of people’s well-being. This was a landmark document indicating that the top officials were responding to the changing international environment by addressing the population-related threats targeted by the UN. In chapter 2 we discussed the human security approach after the Cold War, dealing with the demographic-related threats in a problem-solving manner.



Not only were the CCP leaders shifting their rhetoric to suit the changing international political landscape, they were using it as a shield to resist external critical of its control of population. Despite the struggle of priorities between actors, the top officials publicly emphasised that birth planning in the PRC was a result of “voluntary actions of the Chinese people”. Such “voluntariness” was expressed when ‘every couple’s right to carry out family planning is being protected and respected under the instruction of the party state’s law and population policy’ (SCIO 1995, section 3). Although the meaning of “voluntariness” is obviously different from the general understanding in the rest of the world, the CCP framed it as a “cultural difference”, arguing that the PRC was facing a different reality and therefore needed such harsh practices. In Bourdieu’s perspective, this could be regarded as the Chinese had their own social context due to the authoritarian political structure and historical trajectories such as the abolition of their own traditional culture and social structure in order to pursue political gain in an extremely pragmatic manner. As shown in this chapter, different actors acted in their own interests and struggled for their personal priorities. Such narrow perspectives led to an absence of civil society in Madsen’s cultural and moral terms, trashing the good will of hoping for democratisation, which might have offered a real liberation of the Chinese people.

Due to such differences in context in the authoritarian state, the expression of human rights was also reinterpreted by the SRI. In section 7 of the white paper, the CCP recognised that there were international principles on birth planning expressed terms of human rights (SCIO 1995, section 7). However, they opposed the idea of universal human rights and stressed that the one-child policy was an internal affair and a matter of Chinese sovereignty, and therefore external forces must not intervene. This is a common response from the CCP, on matters ranging from human rights abuse to building artificial islands with military deployment in the South China Sea (Li 2014), regardless of the fact that all these “internal” actions have an impact on the regional security in Asia Pacific. Such a firm stance of the authoritarian state to defend its control of population to secure its party rule should be understood by considering the role of SRI and their interests. Nonetheless, in spite of the fact that the CCP claimed that they do not accept “western ideas of human rights”, this was a turning point for the top CCP officials, transforming its rhetoric to encompass a wider

range of population-related threats in order to “fulfil western expectations”. In the next part of this chapter, we will examine these changes in rhetoric and evaluate the negative by-products of the harsh population policy over decades. Last but not least, the shift from securitising population growth to securitising population decline in the latest development is also discussed using the concept of governmentality of unease from the Paris School.

### *6.5 Evaluating the one-child policy as a technique of Governmentality of Unease*

In the case of the PRC, population growth was securitised in 1979 and was regarded as one of the fundamental security issues of the party state for almost 4 decades. The aim of this dissertation is to examine the relationship between security and population dynamics. By studying the securitisation of population growth and the one-child policy, the thesis has demonstrated that population dynamics was leveraged by the CCP to securitise an array of demographic-related threats in a single securitisation. In earlier sections, this chapter examined the politics of this threat construction by exploring how different actors interacted with each other in both practical and relational perspectives. Understanding their roles and the struggle of priorities provides another layer of explanation of the cycle of implementation of the emergency measure, and the reasons for supporting or resisting the policy.

In addition, the study of the politics of securitisation of population dynamics allows us to understand the actors’ concerns about the effectiveness of the population policy, and how this effectiveness or ineffectiveness can help the actors to achieve their priorities. This section attempts to evaluate the one-child policy, not in terms of its effectiveness in solving all the demographic-related problems, but in terms of how the consequences of the policy affected various actors, leading to a shift by the top CCP officials from securitising population growth to securitising population decline.

1995 was a year of difficulty for the implementation of population control measures in the party state, as it was the year that the PRC's population hit 1.2 billion population, i.e. the population target that was not supposed to be hit until the millennium (Ma 1996).

Although there was a second wave of dramatic fertility reduction in urban areas due to the skyrocketing cost of childbearing after the capitalist reform in 1991, the reform towards a more market-oriented system economically empowered the Chinese, especially the urban population, to pursue their personal priority of having a son rather than the collective priorities constructed by the rhetoric of the SRI. The issue of the first population white paper by the Central government in 1995 can be regarded as a discursive alleviation to reassure the public, reinforcing the importance of having the population control in order to secure the advantageous position of the top officials. Nevertheless, there were surging demographic-related problems in both rural and urban areas in the party state, and these negative effects should be taken into account as they correlate to the changes in the securitisation.

Among all actors, the discontented were always the most passive actors, who bore the negative consequences of the harsh population control. For example, poverty went up by 31 percent in western rural areas in the PRC (Unger 2002), leading to the mass migration of rural Chinese in search of a better life in urban areas (Riley 2004). Yet, due to the population registration system, rural people working in cities were not entitled to any benefits such as medical care, education or pensions. This created social instability as there were increasing numbers of the unsatisfied rural population working in urban areas who had left their child (ren) in the countryside, with their grandparents taking care of the one child generation.

In addition, rural people wanted to travel back and stay with their families at Lunar New Year, which led to a chaotic situation for the party state to handle: millions of people on the move at the same time. These people had to queue up for more than 24 hours to buy a train ticket, or buy one on the black market, which would cost up to a month's wages (Koser and Martin 2011, p.151). Although it is difficult to be certain that returning to meet their only child was the main driving force for such a mass movement of people every year, there are various interviews revealing that staying with their family was one of the most common reasons for these long journeys back to rural areas (Phillips 2016).

However, it was not only the discontented who suffered from the consequences of the one-child policy, but also Chinese society as a whole encountered a lot of trouble. Because of the lack of parenting in rural areas, or parents in urban areas treating the only child like a “little sun”, the one-child generation tends to be generally self-centred with poor communication skills compared with previous generations, and thus have mating difficulties (Chow and Zhao 1996; Kane and Choi 1999). Since the implementation of the one-child policy, there are also records of a high incidence of selective abortion of female infants (Wu and Walther 2006), which has led to an extreme imbalance in the sex ratio and in the same way hinders a healthy population growth in the party state. In some extreme cases, the sex ratio of the province could be 100 women to 148 men, meaning that than a third of the male population a likely to be unable to find a partner in the same province (Li 2007). In this sense, the one-child generation faces an even more difficult battle than their parents did: while the older generation only needed to deal with the RSPs in order to have a son, the one-child generation has a harder task in finding a marriage partner before they can try to have a son. Because of this population-related problem that the one-child generation is facing, there has been a rise of marriage markets in the PRC to help the one-child generation to find partners (Zhang 2013).

In addition, the lower birth rate for the one child generation risks a future shrinking workforce that would hinder economic growth (Liao 2009). It is also worth noting that these single children will need to support up to 8 elderly members of both sides of their families, which means the dependency ratio is rising very steeply. The aged population also encounters various population-related problems such as the provision of health care and pension, which require significant social resources (Nayak 2008).

The implementation of the one-child policy actually led to an increase in the abandonment of female infants and an abnormally high female infant mortality rate 60 per 1,000 live births in the mid-90s (Feng 2005, p.6). There is also a rising “ghost population” made up of first daughters of Chinese families who did not register them so that the family could try again for a son, leaving these undocumented children in a vulnerable position, exposed to human trafficking for prostitution (Huang 2012). It is recorded that the number

of these unregistered vulnerable people is over 13 million. Being unregistered means it is even difficult for them to travel because they need identity documents to buy train tickets legally (VanderKlippe 2015).

In addition, there is a trend for members of the Han majority to marry ethnic minority partners to get a second child permit (Chang 2006). The discontented are trying to use any means they can to fulfil their wish for a son. There are also Han Chinese who migrate (illegally) to places like Hong Kong which do not have any birth restrictions (Sharma 1995). Hong Kong government does not have the authority to decide who can migrate from the PRC to the city-state. Instead, the CCP government has sent 150 Chinese migrants per day to Hong Kong since 1997 (Hung 2014). The Chinese population in Hong Kong is now more than 1 million, and in the city-state they are not restricted by the one-child policy. Nonetheless, the huge immigrant population places a heavy burden on public services in Hong Kong, and that sparks conflicts between local Hongkongers and the Chinese. The unfavourable conditions that hinder ordinary Chinese in fulfilling their own priorities, have led some Chinese to express their frustration and anger by violence. For example, a man in Canton stabbed the local officials in a family planning office because the security practitioners refused to register his second child in the system (Ming Pao 2013).

The reinforcing security practitioners, especially the local ones, are always on the front line, carrying out various procedures and hoping to ease the pain brought about by the harsh population policy, while trying to maintain good relationships both with the discontented and with their superiors and maximise the benefits to themselves from both sides. Both practically and relationally, it is in the practitioners' interests to tackle these demographic-related problems for local stability and economic development under their rule. It is also essential for them to maintain a good relationship with the discontented to avoid potential violence against the local officers. Facing dire social consequences, the front-line practitioners received generous allowances from the Central government, which rose from 2 yuan per capita in 1995 to 8.93 yuan in 2002 (Feng 2005, p.8). The number of full-time practitioners in population control surged from 60,000 in 1980 to 400,000 in 1995. Even though the CCP cut half of the total administrative staff in the entire government in the late

1990s, the security practitioners for birth planning were reduced by only a quarter instead of half which left 300,000 officers for family planning, revealing the importance and seriousness of the one-child policy as an emergency measure and high politics for the top CCP officials.

The local officials had conducted a lot of experiments to solve these demographic-related problems brought by the one-child policy. A baby hatch was first introduced in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province in 2013. The local officers presented it as a “refuge island for abandoned babies”. In fact these are small stations filled with baby boxes parents with various “difficulties” to abandon their first child (Kaiman 2014). This experiment was very popular and received more than 220 abandoned babies within two years in the city. The policy was then followed by other large cities in the party state such as Xi’an and Nanjing. In the PRC, it is a criminal offence to abandon a child and it is treated as murder if the child is abandoned in a place where it is impossible for the child to survive. This experiment has sparked debates on whether the local governments were encouraging child abandonment. But it was reframed by the party rhetoric as an act to protect these children in accordance with the UN convention on the rights of the child article 3, which says it is the government’s responsibility to safeguard the interests of children.

To the security rhetoric initiators, the population policy was always a security technique of governmentality of unease, using the *de jure* securitisation to gain more control over its people – that was the top priority for the CCP leaders. The one-child policy, as the emergency policy of this securitisation, had to be maintained due to its immense importance to the top officials in securing their position. Therefore, instead of solving the root cause of the negative by-products, i.e. the harsh population policy, they attempted to provide alleviations and solve these various demographic-related problems as they arose. Even though it seems they were ignoring the main problem, it was the result of practical and relational considerations for the top priority of the party leaders. By raising the notion of protecting the rights of children with the introduction of baby hatches, the top officials gained advantages in relations with the discontented as it left the door open for them to pursue their son preference; the front-line practitioners were able to gain a better

relationship with the local dissenters by having this flexibility. The top officials not only gained a better relationship with the discontented and with lower rank officers while keeping their rhetoric control intact, but also profited by advertising such alleviation policies as a leap forward in human rights conditions in the authoritarian state, glossing over the fact that the one-child policy itself fundamentally violated human rights in a manner that had never happened in human history.

Regarding to how the top CCP officials responded to the negative effects of the one-child policy, the rhetoric can be summarised into two main categories: 1) restating the strategic importance of population control and 2) acknowledging that the population-related problems stemmed from the policy and advertising it as a human rights improvement when providing alleviation of the negative effects of the demographic-related problems. These characteristics can be found in various official documents. For example, in 1998 the State Family Planning Commission started a project entitled *Future Population Development and Fertility Policy in China*, and the unit came to a conclusion in 2000: two-thirds of their report was spent re-affirming how necessary it was for the PRC to maintain its population control (SFPC 2000). The subject here was already shifting in a subtle manner from the one-child policy to family planning, of which the latter could be applied to population control in dealing with both growth and decline. Interestingly, the report did acknowledge the negative effects brought about by the artificial population transition, such as shrinking future workforce, an ageing population, and surging dependency ratio, and the suggested solution to these population problems was to allow the one child generation to have two children. This would give more flexibility to both the security practitioners and ordinary people, and help to sustain the population control rhetoric of the party leaders.

The party report claimed it was a shift towards a human-centric population policy rather than state-centric and target-oriented one. Although the PRC generally regards western ideas of human rights as an excuse for intervening in the party state's internal matters, and therefore it opposes the idea of universal human rights, the notion of a "human-centric" population policy is a very similar idea to that of human security promoted by the UN (see Chapter 2). On the one hand, the shift revealed that the market

reform of the PRC had increased the economic capital for the ordinary Chinese to secure a better position to escape from the overall rhetoric of the “greater good” for the development of the party state. Therefore the rhetoric was shifted towards the view that the policy was “beneficial” for individuals. On the other hand, because the opening up led to increasing interaction with the international community, the CCP had taken international opinion as a security concern and sought to prevent external forces using the one-child policy as leverage to attack its legitimacy to rule. As a result, this shift also, in the same way, put pressure on the overall rhetoric, leading to the transformation in the rhetoric to focus more on solving population-related problems in order to meet international expectations.

Two months after the report, in the year of the millennium, the CCP government publicised the second decision document on *strengthening family planning work and controlling population growth*. It signified the continuation of the one-child policy by setting a new target of not surpassing 1.4 billion population by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, and more importantly, it opened the era of “human-centric” population control in the party state to handle demographic-related problems caused by the harsh policy. Apart from its normal emphasis on the combination of “national instruction and public voluntariness” to achieve population control, it additionally portrayed the one-child policy as a policy that “respected the legal rights of the people” (CCCPC 2000). It is agreed by many scholars, such as Scharping and Feng, that the 90s and early 2000s were periods of the CCP strengthening its legal authority to enforce the one-child policy (Scharping 2013, p.75; Feng 2005). This legal reinforcement had two main aspects: 1) reassuring the discontented that the central government would prevent the security practitioners carrying out any illegal coercive actions, e.g. the five procedures (Larus 2012) to enforce the population policy and 2) it would be illegal the discontented did not follow the rules and carry out their responsibility in the matter of population control. It is important to note that before this decision document was released, the *Law on Population and Birth Planning* had been drafted and put forward for discussion among the CCP leaders in 1999. This law was finally passed in December 2001, giving the top officials (as well as the lower rank practitioners) legal grounds to punish any discontented who refuse to practice compulsory family planning.



The combination of promoting a fair system of legal enforcement and promulgating population control law can be regarded as a stick and carrot approach for the party leaders to increase their control in terms of legal authority on the matter of demography. It matched their priority when the 2000 decision document put population control in a more important position than the negative effects of the policy such as ageing population, imbalanced sex ratio and psychological problems of the one child generations (CCCPC 2000). The top CCP officials could not lose rhetorical (and legal) control or else they will lose their advantageous position in the securitisation. The population law at the beginning of the new millennium was, according to a spokesperson of the CCP, an act to keep the enforcement of the policy as it was (White 2006, p.238), which reveals again that the priority of the SRI securitising population growth was not to solve population-related problems: instead it was all about using the policy as a means of control over the lower rank officers and the discontented for the political stability of the authoritarian state.

When examining the political environment when the new population law was enacted, we see that it was very close to the transfer of power to the next generation of the CCP leadership in 2003. The new position on population control gave both rhetorical reassurance and a practical legal mandate for the top officials to gain an advantageous position for the stability of the regime and a smooth succession in the leadership of the CCP. Once the succession had been accomplished and the Hu administration secured in 2003, the State Family Planning Commission (SFPC) was renamed and reformed as the National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC) in the same year to deal with a wider range of population-related problems, such as ageing, migration, employment, gender equity and education, in an attempt to minimise the side effects of the techniques of population control for the interests of the top CCP officials.

#### *6.6 From Securitisation of Population Growth to Population Decline*

Judging from the array of negative by-products of the one-child policy, it is clear that the harsh emergency measure was more of a problem than a solution for the Chinese people, despite the fact that it served the party leaders well in terms of governmentality of unease.

The CCP barely maintained its rhetoric and shifted it by emphasising the need for better family planning, so they started loosening policy implementation and shifting its focus to easing the pain brought on by its side effects to keep the population control in place. This can be explained by the priority of the top officials being to leverage demography as a security issue to legitimise population control to secure its advantageous position.

It is recognised that the party leaders relaxed the one-child restriction and shifted the rhetoric to dealing with various population-related problems. One of the major relaxations was made in 2000 to give back to one child generation families the rights of having a second child. The top officials had said that they were considering further relaxing the policy (Kahn 1997; Birchard 1998), which represented a shift in the rhetoric. However, there was never a discussion about terminating policy on population control. The overall rhetoric emphasised the need to maintain family planning to solving demographic-related problems in the PRC. In the third decision document of family planning, issued by the state council in 2006, half of the document insisted on the need to have family planning with Chinese characteristics (NPFPC 2006). The other half of the document went on to emphasise the solution of major demographic-related problems including imbalanced gender ratio, floating population, ageing population and social security. It was the first time that the CCP had addressed these negative effects in a direct manner in an official document. In the past, the rhetoric was mainly to confirm the success of the one-child policy almost without mentioning its dark side.

To illustrate how serious these problems were, Wei pointed out that in 2005 there were 32 million more males than females under the age of 20 in the party state (Zhu *et al.* 2009). This sex imbalance would have led to at least 20 to 30 million young men not being able to find partners (Phillips 2015). Over 300 million abortions and 200 million sterilisations were carried out during the years of implementing the one-child policy (UNPD 2015). The third decision document was one of the most important, giving wide coverage of how the top CCP leaders confronted the “demographic time bomb” planted by its massive social engineering experiment by shifting the focus from tackling population growth to dealing with population-related problems in the aftermath of the abnormally low birth rate caused

by the one-child policy. The document concluded by reminding different levels of practitioners to put their efforts into practising family planning in a legal manner under the party's rhetoric of "human-centric" population control. The international community was also included in the conclusion of the document that response to the concerns over human rights. It communicates in a way that population planning is carried out to ease the pain of population decline, which is a shifting rhetoric from a collective state-centric security perspective to a human-centric one.

After the one-child policy had been in place for more than three decades, the results had proven that it was an unsustainable population policy as it has created too many population-related problems such as the abnormally low birth rate in the PRC. When it had become clear to the top officials that these negative effects were eroding its authority, and damaging its ability to leverage population growth as a security threat for political control, policy relaxation started in 2000, providing more flexibility for the RSP to issue second child permits, and continued in 2006 when more localised policies were allowed in order to ease the pain of demographic-related problems. These were the techniques used by the party leaders in their attempts to maintain population control using the rhetoric of solving demographic-related threats in a collective and human-centric manner for the greater good. Even when the top officials considered lifting the policy to avoid the worsening of all these negative side effects in 2011 (Bohon 2011), the emphasis on the importance of maintaining some form of population control in the party state is further evidence that the top priority was always to leverage population dynamics as a security issue to strengthen its control over lower rank officers and the discontented.

In 2013, there was another policy relaxation as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session of the 18<sup>th</sup> CPC Central Committee decided to issue second child permits to couples one of whom is an only child. Perhaps it is not surprising that such a big move was launched then, as 2012 was the first year that the working population in the world's factory declined, which seems ironic as the one-child policy was supposed to boost economic development, not restrict it. Basten and Jang have reviewed how this relaxation policy contributed to solving the demographic-related threats by putting population growth in the PRC back on its feet, and

shown that the impact was very limited (Basten and Jiang 2014). The obvious disadvantages of the one-child policy were apparently creating growing problems that in economic and political terms outweighed the benefits of keeping it. The shrinking labour force would hinder the economic development of the PRC, which was critical in a non-democratic developing nation for the government to sustain its rule (Arase 2010). This was the same logic that Deng used in 1979 to leverage population growth as a threat to modernisation and economic take-off. There was a need for the CCP leaders to end the emergency measure of the securitisation of population growth and replace it with policies to tackle the threats caused by the low birth rate artificially created by the extreme social engineering program. Finally, in 2015, the year when there was a demographic crossover in the authoritarian state with the aged population outnumbering the population below 16 years old, the CCP announced the end of the one-child policy.

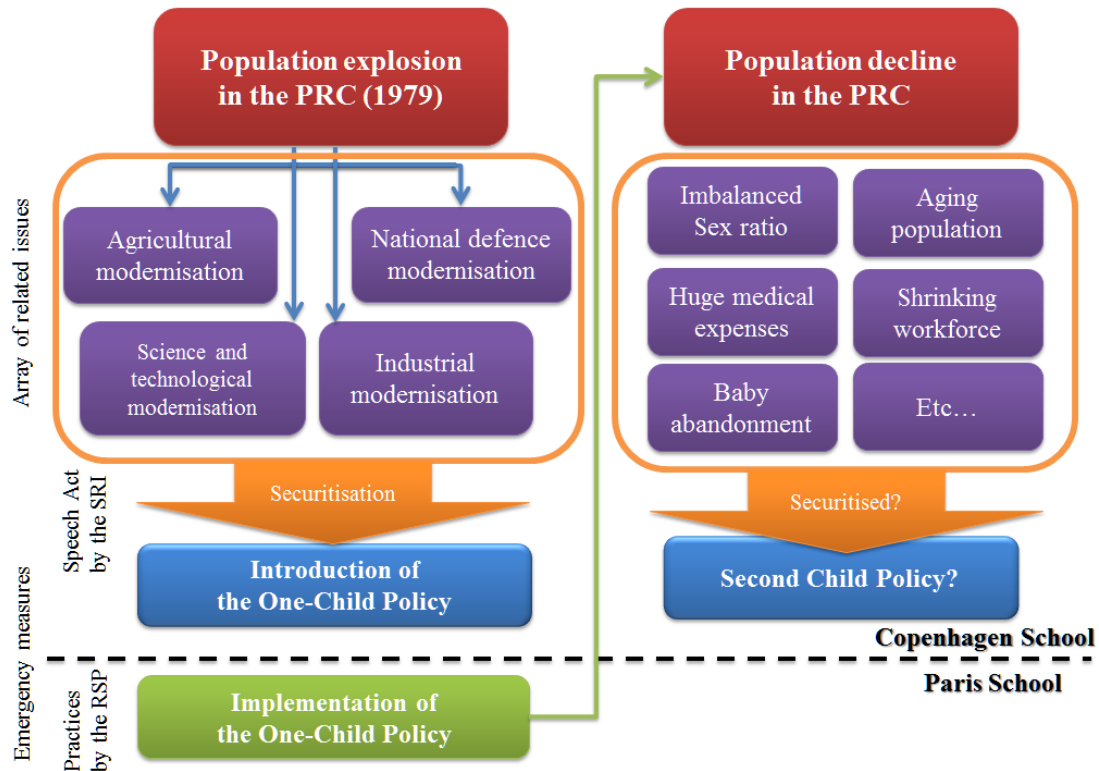
According to the CCP official media Xinhua, the end of the one-child policy would be followed by a second child policy that would allow every couple to have two children, in response to the ageing population of the party state (Xinhua 2015). This was clearly not a sudden change as the rhetoric had been changing since 2000 when it moved away from the one-child policy, i.e. securitising population growth, to easing the pain of the artificial population decline by the means of maintaining family planning in the party state. The decision was made in the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Central Committee in October 2015 and the state council amended the population law in December 2015. With the abandonment of the one-child policy, the positive messages about having one child were transferred onto the benefits of having two children in Chinese families starting from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016. Although the national law and the party's rhetoric were re-framed in just 2 months, it took longer to establish new front-line local practices. Until the end of 2016, there was still a lack of clear localised measures presented to the security practitioners to explain how this second child policy would be implemented. It seems that the local officers were waiting for more practical instruction from the top officials before they could start to change family planning practices.

The baby boomers born in the mid and late 60s are almost at the end of their reproductive years. Although there are various interviews revealing that some of the discontented would have been eager to try for a second child (Connor 2015), preferably a son, the termination of the policy seems to have come a decade later than it should have. The golden opportunity to solve the shrinking population has long gone and the party state is in danger of getting old before getting rich. Nonetheless, it would still be a considerable relief for the front-line practitioners to implement looser population controls, and for the discontented to get second chance to have a son under the new rhetoric of the party leaders. There would be less coercion on enforcing population control for the local officers and there would be less direct confrontation with the local dissenters. The CCP leaders are now turning to their construction of small family norms, and the frontline practitioners need to review their local population policies in accordance with the changed rhetoric. Gietel-Basten has predicted that there will be a short-term boost in population growth to deal with the population decline (Phillips 2015).

Yet the population deadlock in the PRC cannot be broken easily. A decade of relaxation has already proven that simply allowing rural Chinese to have two children (when the first born is a daughter) is not enough, not forgetting that in the urban areas the birth rate has fallen as low as in any developed city in the world. Regarding the demographic-related problems brought on by population decline, will there be a coercive second child policy introduced in the manner of the rapid escalation of the one-child policy? Arguably, the CCP leaders have not carried out the full shift towards securitisation of population decline insofar as there is no sign that any emergency measure is going to be introduced (although it could be arguable that there was no sign of the introduction of the one-child policy before 1979). To detect such a sign will require ongoing examination of the continuous shifting rhetoric of the party leaders, and of whether the other actors would cooperate and interact. Demography as a security concern will remain one of the most prominent issues for all actors, regardless of their different priorities. As Premier Wen said, ‘when you multiply any problem by the PRC’s population, it is a very big problem. But when you divide it by its population, it becomes very small’ (Kroeber 2016). In the next

decades, how different actors interact and cooperate in their different struggles of priorities will be the key to determining in which direction the Chinese population moves.

Figure 10: Securitisation of Population Dynamics in the PRC



With the one-child policy coming to an end, the top officials insist on maintaining their authority in controlling the reproductive decisions of the Chinese by shifting the securitisation of population growth to population decline (see figure 10 above). It is predicted that according to the party leaders' priority of maintaining their advantageous position, a future second child policy will be implemented. The question is how far the control will extend and when an emergency policy securitising population decline will be introduced. Through population control, the top CCP officials conducts its surveillance and asserts its power over other actors and fulfils its priority to use population dynamics as a technique of fear, amplifying it as security issues and taking the power of decision-making away from its people to secure its advantageous position in the authoritarian state. This is the top priority that the party leaders care about, not solving the population-related

problems. The only reason why population dynamics was securitised was to connect various threats and raise them to the status of high politics – as they deal with matters of life and death, emergency measures have the power to control other actors' behaviour.

For all the suffering that the Chinese had been through due to the CCP's population control, its fertility rate was suppressed and the demographic-related problems brought on by population growth were to a certain extent dealt with by the one-child policy, leaving China with an abnormally low population growth rate among the LDCs. Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that such coercive control came at the very high cost of widespread abuse of human rights, and the physical and psychological trauma of its people ranging from extremely imbalanced sex ratio and later mating problems for millions of young Chinese, lower marriage rate, and abnormally low population growth rate among the LDCs, not to mention the risks to the economy of the greying population, unsustainable pension and medical system and labour shrinkage.

Although there is no research indicating these demographic-related problems are the main reasons driving the Chinese to migrate to other countries, the net number of migrants in the PRC is -1.8 million in 2015 (UNPD 2015). This means that there are millions of Chinese migrating to the rest of the world and that could possibly cause various demographic-related problems such as parallel trading of goods like baby formula and bidding up property prices in the receiving countries (Wong 2013; Stiem 2016). In 2004, Canada cancelled its immigrant investor program, which 80% of the applicants were Chinese, as the Canada government claimed that these investors paid 'significantly lower taxes over a lifetime than other immigrants' (Marlow 2014; VanderKlippe 2014; Knowles 2016, chapter 13).

This research set out to examine the ideational relationship of security and population dynamics. It is clear that the extraordinary measure of the coercive one-child policy could only be implemented by an authoritarian state like the PRC, but what is important from what this research reveals is that the party state carried out a very successful politicisation and securitisation with its skilful linguistic devices and security rhetoric, to bring

demography and security together. By showing how the securitising actors framed population dynamics as existential threats in the case of the PRC, and how the different agents interacted according to their own priorities, the research can offer useful information for policy makers, scholars, NGOs and other pressure groups across the globe who may wish to adopt similar rhetorical techniques and securitise (or counter securitise) population dynamics and its branches of population-related threats according to their struggles of priority. Hopefully, this can contribute to easing the pain brought on by population dynamics in the long run.



## **Chapter 7 – Conclusion**

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This dissertation has examined the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics by adopting a combined analytical framework drawn from both the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. It argues that this is a comprehensive way to reveal the ideational relationship of the twin issues as both the security rhetoric and practices are examined, which also enables us to understand the politics of the securitisation of population dynamics in both philosophical and sociological approaches. We have reviewed the changing population policies correlating with its political, ideational, cultural and practical factors in the party state.

The thesis argues that population dynamics was leveraged to securitise (as the cause of) various security issues in the case of the PRC. The ideational relationship is built upon the discursive constructions of population dynamics as (a set of) existential threats in the Copenhagen School framework. The successful securitisation legitimises the use of emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy, to tackle the existential threats perceived under the security rhetoric of the top Chinese officials.

Through the lens of the Copenhagen School, security is regarded as a negative concept that should be tackled in an urgent manner, using emergency measures. But in the case of the PRC, the securitisation was prolonged, lasting for almost 4 decades. With the application of the Paris School's approach, we took a closer look at how the one-child policy was implemented by security practitioners. Various security techniques of different actors in the securitisation of population dynamics were identified, as well as their struggling of priorities and the politics of securitisation. The one-child policy, as an emergency measure, was also a security technique adopted by the top CCP officials to maintain their advantageous position as a technique for maintaining control, which Bigo called it governmentality of unease.

This dissertation takes account of the fact that the PRC is a socialist state, where the process of securitisation is different from western applications. Instead of taking the

Copenhagen School framework off-the-shelf, this research has provided additional concepts on the unique socialist approach to securitisation, i.e. SRI, RSP and DRA. The thesis is that under the Communist propaganda, the entire state should be regarded as a giant securitising organism in which the brain, i.e. top CCP officials as security rhetoric initiators, signals the idea of securitisation, and the organs, i.e. lower rank officials who serve as reinforcing security practitioners, follow and reinforce the rhetorical constructions based on their own understanding.

In this scenario, who are the relevant audiences that need to be convinced? This research argues that in this case, unlike in normal securitisation, it is the citizens who disagree with the rhetoric, i.e. the discontented, who should be regarded as the audiences that need to be convinced by the securitising organism. The categorisation and examination of different actors can reveal the politics of the securitisation, e.g. the struggles of priority and governmentality of unease, and this approach is transferable to other case studies of the dynamics of securitisation.

Having outlined the contribution of the dissertation, this concluding chapter will now summarise the major findings of each chapter in relation to the research objectives set out in the introduction.

### *7.1 Ideational Relationship established through Politicisation and Securitisation*

Research purpose 1): To examine the discursive speech acts that the PRC used in order to establish an ideational relationship between population growth and security through a successful securitisation and introduce its emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy.

Chapter 4 of this dissertation reviews the changing perceptions of population growth in the party state. It follows the Copenhagen School's approach to investigate how population growth was politicised, which laid a foundation for the later securitisation. The chapter examines how the PRC politicised population growth with its socialist propaganda, allowing us to gain an understanding of the socialist approach to politicising an issue.

The chapter also demonstrates how the ideational relationship between the twin issues was drawn by the Asian non-democratic regime. It argues that the changing perception of population growth went through 3 distinct stages during the process of politicisation. The first stage was full of ideological contradictions which arose from the incompatibility between Marxism and population control. As demonstrated in chapter 4, Marx strongly rejected the idea of population control as he regarded it as blaming the lower class for all the demographic-related problems. In the PRC, officials were trying to follow a hard line of Marxism as it was the very ideology that legitimised the rule of the CCP.

Nevertheless, rapid population growth in the early PRC had led to millions of deaths, most notoriously in the Great Chinese Famine, forcing the CCP officials to confront the divergence between ideology and the real situation of the party state. Mao successfully built ideational connections by bringing Communist collective planning into the matter of reproduction control. This marked the second stage, which was an ideological transformation from Marxism to Maoism among top CCP officials. The Maoist idea of population planning was successfully transferred to Chinese society through Communist propaganda, which the thesis regards as the third stage, i.e. the ideational transformation of population growth in Chinese society.

Through these 3 stages, population growth was successfully politicised after the ideological and ideational transformation in the party state. In addition, ideational connections were established by Communist propaganda saying that population growth would endanger the productivity, health, education, food security and national planning of the socialist state. Thereby, people were largely convinced that they should give up their personal reproductive decisions for the collective good, i.e. the development of the socialist state. In fact, after the Later, Longer, Fewer policy was adopted, the fertility rate of the Chinese declined steeply. It was a very successful politicisation, considering the fact that the CCP had manufactured a revolution in family beliefs, especially with regard to family size and to certain extent gender equality.

If the politicisation of population growth and the Later, Longer, Fewer policy were such a great success, what are the reasons for the introduction of the one-child policy in 1979?

Chapter 5 of the dissertation, on the one hand, adopts the Copenhagen School's securitisation framework to examine the securitisation of population growth and the legitimisation of the use of the emergency measure, i.e. the one-child policy, through the speech acts of the CCP officials. The chapter argues that in the socialist setting of the party state, the CCP top officials were the security rhetoric initiators, dominating in the discursive construction of threat throughout the securitisation.

On the other hand, the chapter adopts the Paris School perspective to study the information presented in the securitisation, along with references to prominent political changes in the party state. It indicates that the population policy cycle changed according to the changing political environment in the party state, e.g. the one-child policy was strictly enforced for several years from the start of Deng's government.

The CCP officials did not justify how the population target, i.e. a maximum of 1.2 billion by the end of 2000, was arrived at. Various population projections in the late 70s and early 80s indicated that there would be around 1.28 billion people in the PRC by the millennium without the one-child policy. If the one-child policy had been strictly enforced, the population by 2000 would definitely have been below the 1.2 billion target, which indicates that all the resources invested in implementing the harsh one-child policy were not (merely) aimed at kerbing the already fairly low birth rate.

In the early implementation of the one-child policy, it encountered significant resistance from the discontented Chinese. Chapter 5 of the dissertation argues that the success of the politicisation in the 70s was mainly due to the fact that the power of decision making was still in the hands of the public, despite significant social pressure from the collective system. But the stepping up from the *de facto* politicisation to a *de jure* securitisation of population growth took away the power of birth decision making from the people of the authoritarian state. Given that it was introduced during the power transition

period of the CCP, the chapter argues that the population policy was leveraged for the stepping up of control by the CCP in order to stabilise the rule of the new government.

The policy cycle reveals that the harsh enforcements such as forced sterilisation and abortion were relaxed a few years after the power transition. Based on the authoritarian political background of the party state, the chapter highlights the brutal enforcement regime and regards the one-child policy itself as a way to single out the discontented that dared to confront the authority of the CCP and neutralise them, as the securitisation had rhetorically constructed population growth as the threat against the 4 modernisations for the development of the socialist state. The enforcement of the one-child policy was later loosened, the subject of further investigation in Chapter 4 of the security practices and the policy cycle of the emergency measure in the prolonged securitisation.

## *7.2 The Everyday Practices and the Struggles of Priorities*

Research purpose 2): To examine the everyday security practices of the one-child policy and the struggles of priorities among different actors, in order to reveal the politics of the prolonged securitisation.

After examining the security rhetoric constructed by the successful securitisation, chapter 6 of the thesis adopts the Paris School approach to study the implementation of the one-child policy, and the struggle of priorities among different actors, i.e. the SRI, RSP and the DRA. It develops, from a practical and relational perspective, an alternative explanation of the securitisation of population dynamics. Different actors have their own roles and priorities that alter their security practices in both active and passive ways.

For example, the securitisation of population growth was initialled by the top officials of the PRC. Other actors were bonded under the one-child policy set by the top officials. This is consistent with the findings in chapter 5 that the securitisation of population growth, and its emergency measure, the one-child policy, were security techniques to increase the CCP's control over its people. So, in chapter 6, we recognise the policy cycle that correlates with the domestic and international environment. For example, the enforcement of the one-

child policy became stricter after the Tiananmen Square massacre, when ethnic minorities were brought under the CCP's population control. "Population control" here is not specifically about fertility control, but also refers to the broadly symbolic meaning that the CCP has the real power to alter personal decisions as important as reproductive decisions.

Regarding the local officials who carried out the everyday practices of birth planning, the relational approach reveals their middleman position and their difficulties in maintaining good relationships with their superiors and with the local residents. Since these local practitioners were, like the discontented, forced to obey the rules set by the top officials, the chapter explains the RSP-DRA coalition in order to achieve their personal priorities rather than the priority forced upon them by the security rhetoric. For example, the discontented would always want to have a son, and sometimes the local officers would turn a blind eye to unauthorised pregnancies so that they could later collect fines from the discontented, while at the same time winning favour with the locals for not stopping the illegal birth.

The Paris School approach allows close examination of the practices, and identifies the practical and relational concerns guiding the actions of different actors. Chapter 6 highlights the cycle of tightening and loosening of the one-child policy generated by these practical and relational concerns of different actors who were competing to achieve their own priorities. After the early years of harsh enforcement in the first few years of the new government's rule, the policy was loosened allowing the RSP-DRA coalition room for their priorities, until the Tiananmen Square massacre in the late 80s. As mentioned above, the policy was tightened and extended to ethnic minorities as a result of the practical and relational considerations. Nevertheless, due to the changing international environment, the security rhetoric was moving in another direction.

### *7.3 Governmentality of Unease: The Shift from Securitising Population Growth to Population Decline*

Research purpose 3) To evaluate the one-child policy as a technique for governmentality of unease and demonstrate how this contributed to a shift from securitising population growth to population decline

Following the policy cycle of the one-child policy up to the early 90s, chapter 6 recognises the changing rhetoric of the one-child policy: In the early 90s, the top CCP officials began to mention “western demographic problems” arising in the party state. On the one hand, they strengthened the rhetoric of the one-child policy and reiterated the need to maintain the existence of the population policy domestically. On the other hand, they discursively stressed tackling the brutal enforcement methods in order to hit the humanitarian targets set out by the global community to get recognition internationally. After that, the policy was gradually loosened, and attention turned to various demographic-related problems that mostly occur only in more developed countries, e.g. shrinking population, ageing population, high pension and medical costs. These are all consequences of the huge social engineering policy that led to an abnormally low birth rate for a less developed country.

In response to the rising demographic-related problems created by the one-child policy, the obvious measure was to end the one-child policy. However, this would make the security rhetoric that the CCP had spent decades constructing seems inconsistent. Moreover, terminating the policy would mean giving up control of people's decision making, which would fundamentally erode the power of the CCP, the preservation of which was the major objective that the Chinese officials had in securitising population dynamics.

That is why it took almost another 2 decades for the PRC to subtly shift its rhetoric towards a more human-centric version of birth control to combat the demographic-related threats in the party state. At the same time, the lower rank officials and the discontented enjoyed a higher degree of flexibility to achieve their priorities under the loosening of the

population policy, for example, in 2013 the CCP allowed couples to have a second child when one of the parents was a single child.

The chapter ends with the termination of the one-child policy, which marked the end of the securitisation of population growth. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the demographic-related threats connected to population growth have been removed. On the contrary, the country is facing a new set of demographic-related threats, which are ideationally linked to population decline. Population policy in the PRC has thus shifted from a securitisation in the form of the one-child policy to a second child policy. It is apparent that the CCP is not giving up leveraging population dynamics as governmentality of unease to control its population.

Today, in 2017, we are still in a honeymoon period in which the securitisation of population decline has not been conducted yet. But one thing is clear: after all the tragedies caused by both population growth and the one-child policy, the CCP is determined to continue to take charge of people's personal lives through some form of population control. Following the examination of the securitisation of population growth, it is reasonable to predict that the PRC will follow the same logic to draw ideational connections between security and various threats related to population decline, and to legitimise the use of new emergency measures as a security technique of governmentality of unease.

#### *7.4 Future Research and Contribution to Policy Makers and Academics*

By studying the case of the PRC, this dissertation has made clear the ideational relationship between security and population dynamics. It has demonstrated that through rhetorical politicisation and securitisation, ideational relationships can be built up in order to connect various threats to one single root, i.e. population dynamics and securitise it in a single securitisation. In this manner, it shed lights for both policy makers and academics on how to initiate further securitisations by rhetorical construction and thereby tackle various threats at once. In addition, the practical and relational approach to examining the security practices carried out in the PRC contributes to providing additional understanding



of how various actors act and react to the securitisation, what the driving forces are for them and how to maintain a balance in the struggle of priority.

Despite the fact that the PRC is an authoritarian state whose coercive measures can hardly be applied elsewhere, the practices of a variety of positive and negative motivations, the propaganda setting for the collective good, and the multi-level communication model could also be partially applicable in other cases. This depends on coming up with effective yet acceptable emergency measures, based on the growing understanding of both the rhetorical, practical and relational perspectives, in (future) securitisation of population dynamics.

This research also reveals the continuous nature of population dynamics: that it comes in cycles that humankind needs to deal with demographic-related issues in a constant manner, no matter whether these issues stem from population explosion or shrinking population. The case of the PRC, where the rhetoric is shifting from securitising population growth to dealing with decline, serves as a living demonstration of the inevitable nature of population dynamics. Therefore, it is necessary to include population dynamics as a constant factor when considering a comprehensive security agenda. Population policy should also be regarded as a branch of security policy, due to its immense importance to security.

As to future research, this dissertation serves as an example of reviewing the rhetorical construction of politicisation and securitisation and the implementation of an emergency measure of population control, with the combined analytical framework. The framework has only been applied in the case of the PRC but could also be applicable to other cases to examine how an ideational relationship of the twin issues is/can be built by a successful securitisation. It will also be interesting to examine the future securitising moves of the PRC, its approach to securitisation of population decline, and of course the politics of the securitisation as it opens up an additional contextual understanding of the struggling priorities among various actors.

It is the sincere hope of the author that as we gain more understanding of ideational connections between security and population dynamics, it will empower policymakers and academics to rhetorically construct the securitisation of population dynamics more effectively so as to ease the pain brought about by various demographic-related threats in various cases, and on top of that to design emergency measures that can best balance the practical and relational struggle of priorities among different actors.

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